

COUNTRY LIFE

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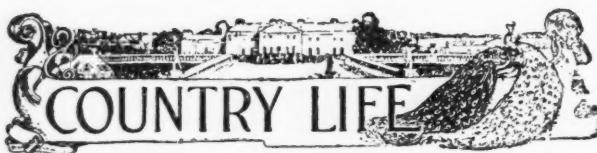
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52, Gower Street,



COUNTRY LIFE
The Journal for all interested in
Country Life and Country Pursuits

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THE BUTTER QUESTION.

OUR "Correspondence" columns frequently bear testimony to the interest felt by the public in the subject of this article, and it is needless to remind anyone that at the moment a Departmental Committee of the House of Commons is dealing with one aspect of it. Here we would like to be able to throw aside what may be called the side issues, and to arrive, if possible, at the practical steps which can be taken. There are certain facts which we must assume all who are practically concerned with the question to know, and therefore a mere glance at them will be sufficient. The first point, and it is one to which a correspondent directs attention in the current issue, is that the English public knows next to nothing about butter. It has no fastidiousness in regard to quality. Provided that it is not rancid, or contains no strikingly unpleasant flavour, it is considered quite good enough for the table, and this applies to many more than the individual consumer. We do not know of a single club in London which makes a point of providing its members only with the very best quality of butter. The statement may seem to be put somewhat strongly, because the committees of the clubs, as a rule, do what they can to provide the best possible food for the members. But then they are obliged to go to the very large shops, as they are consumers on a big scale; and the best of the shops, unfortunately, deal only in factory-made butter. No doubt it is of good quality. We are alluding at the moment to firms of very high standing, who make it a point to give to their customers substantial value for the price they pay. And it is not their

fault, either. It is well known that what they have to demand in the interests of their business is uniformity of quality, and uniformity of quality is gained by the simple process of blending several qualities. No doubt all the butter that comes under this category is good; the blender sees to that when purchasing, and selects one butter as being qualified for the first class, while he selects inferior lots for the second class, and a still more inferior article for the cheapest brands of butter. But our point is that, in order to secure what he calls uniformity in the best class of butter, he must mix the finest product of the dairies with that which is not quite so fine. Consequently, when the customer goes to the shop, it is next door to impossible for him to obtain perfect butter as it comes from the very best English dairies. Those who make it, as a matter of fact, do not deal with the shops at all, but depend on a select circle of private customers, who are willing to pay the extra price that is very properly demanded.

If proof were wanted that the English public, broadly speaking, does not know how to distinguish between the finest butter and the factory-made article sold in the shops, it can be furnished in the evidence supplied to the Departmental Committee on colouring. If people's tastes were keenly educated, the colouring matter introduced into butter would make very little difference, whether it was straw-coloured or golden. The palate would be able to say "This is good," or "This is not good." But because the palate is not an educated one, the manufacturers of butter can take stuff that, to use a proverbial expression, is not more than good enough to grease cart wheels with, and by adding colouring matter pass it off as respectable butter. The same trick is worked with equal success on the substitutes for butter that are used in poor households. It has been stated before the committee that margarine is made to look tempting by this means, and that the trick cannot be stopped as long as the use of colouring matter in butter is allowed. Why it should not be abolished in both cases is something of a puzzle to the ordinary man. No one who has the slightest qualification to speak would for a moment advance so absurd a proposition as that the addition of colouring matter adds in any way to the intrinsic value of this article of diet. If it did that, there would be reason for taking action against the use of it as an adulterant; but the plain truth is that colouring matter in butter is used only as a cloak to conceal the inferiority of the quality. In a word, its use is indistinguishable from that of any other material used for the purpose of adulteration. It needs to be stated with all the emphasis it is possible to command that coloured butter is not and cannot be pure butter.

The practical outcome of these remarks will be evident enough. It would be a hopeless piece of stupidity for the English farmer to attempt to compete with the factory-made article sent in from abroad and sold in shops. A piece of stupidity, because he can obtain for his milk in its raw state more than he would get for the butter made from it. But, supposing that a fair proportion of the English public knew and valued excellence in butter, and dairy people were prohibited from using any colouring matter that would make the bad article have the appearance of what was good, then possibly a sufficient market might be formed to encourage the best of our dairies to offer the very finest butter, and to obtain a price that would recompense them. It is very little short of a national reproach that, if anyone goes into one of the great stores and asks for the best butter, it is usually Brittany, or, at any rate, a foreign, butter that is offered. The change to be desired is that, when this article is preferred, the shopman should naturally produce a supply of the very best Jersey butter made in England. Even those who are most emphatic in praise of the shopkeeper's quality of uniformity, will readily admit that there is no butter in the world equal to that produced by Jersey cows when fed on the best of English grass and clover. Neither in Brittany nor in New Zealand, both of which produce good butter, can they beat the English farmer when he does his best under the most favourable circumstances. But it would be useless to deny that to encourage him to do this it would be necessary to put a price upon it higher than that which is readily obtained for the factory-made butter. In the height of the season, when the grass is at its best—that is to say, when spring is merging into summer—it might be, perhaps, possible to produce the kind of butter we have described at a profit on the prices now charged; but during the rest of the year this cannot be done. And that is the real reason why the English farmer is so careful not to embark his capital on dairying with a view to butter.

Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR frontispiece this week is a portrait of Miss Hermione Drury. Miss Drury is the only daughter of Mr. F. S. E. Drury, and is engaged to the Honourable Arthur Coke, second son of Viscount Coke, and grandson of the Earl of Leicester. Her wedding is fixed for the second week in May.

COUNTRY



NOTES.

A PROPOSAL which deserves the heartiest support of the British public is that means should be taken to collect subscriptions for the benefit of the poor peasants who have suffered from the eruption of Vesuvius. It is impossible at present to estimate the damage, but it is certain that the poorest class of cultivators must have suffered to an enormous extent. Not only have their fields been damaged by the actual lava, but Vesuvius continues to send forth clouds of grey dust which, falling like a snow-shower on the surrounding country, has buried ground and vegetation in some cases to the depth of three or four feet. How to deal with it passes ingenuity. There is no hope of its melting, as would be the case with a fall of snow, and should rain come, the dust would only be converted into mud, while the danger is imminent that masses of mud will be brought down from the mountain and spread over the cultivable fields. In the course of several years, no doubt, the dust will become fertile soil for the growing of garden and agricultural crops; but in the meantime, and for several harvests to come, there is little or no chance of the husbandman reaping a return.

Most of the countries of Europe have been very quick to recognise and evince their sympathy for Italy in this great and unlooked-for misfortune. France and Austria-Hungary were particularly prompt in offering not only sympathy, but material help. Germany, irritated, as plainly appeared, by the result of the conference at Algeciras, seemed at first inclined to ignore the demand made on common humanity by the suffering at the base of Vesuvius; but in the end, probably ashamed of this attitude, a formal declaration of sympathy was sent to Italy. Our own course of action is clearly marked out. With Italy we have for several generations been on terms of special sympathy, and were it not so, the generous instinct of Great Britain is always to extend a helping hand to the suffering. The only point to be considered, therefore, is how that is to be most effectively accomplished, and we do not know that there is any plan superior to the old-fashioned one of opening a Lord Mayor's fund. This is the time-honoured avenue by means of which the inhabitants of this country are accustomed to extend their help to those who need it.

The visit of King Edward VII. and Queen Alexandra to Athens ought to be one of very considerable interest. There is, in the first place, a revival of the old sports for which the capital in ancient times was so famous. At the very spot where Pheidippides fell proclaiming the victory of Marathon the prizes will be awarded to the victors. But this was arranged beforehand; that which was not in the programme is equally interesting. Almost on the eve of the arrival of the Royal visitors there was discovered on the bank of the river Eurotas, near the site of ancient Sparta, the famous temple of Artemis, with many statues and ornaments of gold, silver, and ivory. Thus, there seems to be a combination of circumstances to render this visit a pleasant and memorable one. No doubt we shall hear much in future of the temple of Artemis when scholars have had time to bring their erudition to bear on the discovery.

President Roosevelt is almost as productive as the Kaiser himself of sayings that set the world talking, and his latest declaration is not the least startling of those he has made. He has come to the conclusion that extreme riches in citizens are as undesirable as extreme poverty, and is shadowing forth the steps that might possibly be taken to reduce the colossal incomes for which

America is famous. The question thus raised is an extremely difficult one to solve. We cannot forget that great danger must reside in any attempt to limit the energy of the individual. A moment's reflection shows that a man who has amassed a very large fortune by trade must have found employment for innumerable workmen and machinery. Whether his own best interests be served or not it is pretty certain that he gives an impetus to the activity and enterprise of other people. We can quite see what is President Roosevelt's point of view, and understand, too, that it will command a great amount of sympathy, yet the matter is not one that can be decided on merely superficial considerations. It wants to be argued out by those who have no personal interest in the result and are not swayed by political bias.

The Easter holidays come first in the year, and those of 1906 are likely to leave behind them most delightful memories. Probably no vacation in the year is quite so pleasant as a fine Easter, especially to those who have been shut up in town during the long winter; and this year the sky was cloudless, the sun shone all day, and the air was neither so hot as to be oppressive, nor so cold as to be uncomfortable. The spring is late, but on that account all the more beautiful, and it welcomed those who made an exodus from the cities with sprouting green and pretty colours and the songs of innumerable birds. Perhaps the only uncomfortable place during the holidays was the King's highway. Motors, cycles, and horse carriages whirling along kept up a perpetual cloud of dust, so that the pedestrians who were wise abandoned it for the footpath way, which is so much pleasanter in every respect. One cannot wonder that the number of travellers by train and steamer came close to breaking the record for Easter, even if it did not quite succeed.

THE BIRDS AT DAYBREAK.

Roused all at once from sleep,
They set the country ringing;
Woods, gardens, orchards deep
Re-echo with their singing.
What time the first faint streaks of light
Grey-hued and tender,
Bid silent, leaden-footed Night
Her place surrender.

O perfect hour of dawn!
The birds' great hour of pleasure,
When across field and lawn,
Dew-wet they pour their treasure;
When peace sublime breathes over all,
And Earth rejoices.
Filled, like some dim arcaded hall,
With hidden voices.

How good like them to see
A day of April breaking!
To watch each mist-girt tree
Its shape familiar taking!
To feel the joy of life so strong
That its possession
In bursts of soul-inspiring song
Must find expression!

But, lo! the crimson east
With gorgeous fires is flaming,
To slumbering man and beast
Their need to toil proclaiming;
And soon our singers, one by one
Their music ending,
Fall silent to behold the sun
His path ascending.

R. S. T. C.

A painful and topical interest is given to the article in another part of the paper on the burning of gorse by the reports of conflagrations on commons and moors that have just come to hand. At Esher the Dorking Fire Brigade had to be called into action to extinguish a fire which had broken out on Ardbrook Common, and just managed to save some farm buildings which had been threatened. On Shap Fells, Westmorland, a great fire broke out on Lord Lonsdale's grouse moors, and, fanned by a south-westerly wind, spread over a wide extent of country; although great efforts were made to subdue it, it was still burning at dusk. How these fires occur it is always difficult to say. But those who are in the country should remember that this year the withered herbage is more than usually inflammable, for reasons that are quite plain. A drought has lasted for several weeks, and has been accompanied by brilliant sunshine and drying winds, so that last year's herbage is like tinder, whilst the greenstuff of the present year has not yet attained to any growth that would serve to check the fire. Under these circumstances, those who smoke and throw away lighted matches ought to be very careful.

The magistrates of Glasgow have earned for themselves considerable notoriety, if not fame, for the enterprise with which they seek to check the common failing of the citizens of

St. Mungo. At Easter this year they determined to put down drinking by very stringent measures, and so ordained that no public-house should be opened from nine o'clock on Saturday night until Monday morning. Their intentions are extremely laudable; but the inhabitants of Great Britain have a way of protesting against interference with their personal freedom, and the result in this case was that the topers of Scotland's largest city in no inconsiderable numbers proceeded to constitute themselves *bona fide* travellers, and set out on tramcar, on foot, and in various vehicles to those portions of suburban Glasgow which are not under the control of the magistrates. The result was that there was probably more drunkenness in the city than there would have been if things had been left to take their usual course. The incident furnished an object-lesson in temperance, which shows, if it shows anything, that persuasion is greater than force; and we are afraid that there is no royal road to temperance. The goal can be reached only by appealing to the heart and mind, not by laying down hard-and-fast sumptuary laws.

Dr. E. Lönnberg, in the last issue of the *Ibis*, describes a remarkable and interesting form of the capercailzie from Finland, his description being supplemented by a coloured plate. Slightly smaller than the typical *Tetrao urogallus*, the cocks differ further therefrom in their duller coloration, in that the ground colour of the back and wing coverts is of a chestnut colour, vermiculated with black. There are no white markings on the wings, tail, or flanks, while the dark glossy green crescentic patch across the breast, so conspicuous in the normal form, is wanting. Altogether some six specimens of this form are known, and Dr. Lönnberg contends that they must be regarded as representing a sub-species—a geographical race of the *T. urogallus*—which he proposes to call *Tetrao urogallus lugens*.

To the excitement of big-game-hunting in Africa there will henceforth be added no little uneasiness, inasmuch as the pursuit thereof entails the risk of contracting one of the most dreadful of all known diseases—sleeping-sickness—dreadful because, at present at any rate, incurable, and ultimately fatal. Hitherto it has been supposed that Europeans were immune to this disease. But the sad death last week, in University College Hospital, London, of Mr. John Mahon, the late director of the botanical gardens at Entebbe, Uganda, after a lingering and painful illness of two years, has shattered this belief for ever. Nor is he the only victim, for at the end of last week, Lieutenant Forbes Tulloch was invalidated home from Entebbe suffering from the same dreadful malady. Sleeping-sickness is caused by a parasitic protozoan known as a trypanosome (*Trypanosoma gambiense*), which infests the blood, and the cavities of the nervous system—the brain and spinal cord. These minute, but terrible organisms, it is now known, are carried and distributed by the bite of a species of tsetse-fly (*Glossina palpalis*), a fact discovered some three years since by the investigations in Uganda of Colonel David Bruce.

No less than eight species of tsetse-fly are now known to science, and of these five at least are disseminators of trypanosomiasis. Though it is highly probable that more than one species may be the agent in the spread of sleeping-sickness, *Glossina palpalis* is the only species which as yet has been proved to be so. But at least four of the remaining species are disseminators of that scourge of domestic cattle nagana, a disease closely resembling sleeping-sickness, and almost equally fatal. Horses succumb in about three weeks, donkeys after a somewhat longer period. The domestic ox, like the horse, is peculiarly susceptible, the dog scarcely less so, while sheep and goats would appear to be immune, as are the big game of the country. The dread *Glossina palpalis*, the host of the sleeping-sickness parasite, appears, however, to be in nowise dependent on big game for its existence, but to subsist on human blood. Certainly this species of tsetse appears where game is conspicuous only by its absence. It is a remarkable fact, but this terror has appeared in Uganda only within the last year or two, having made its way along the river systems from the West Coast of Africa. Yet during the first two years of its appearance in Uganda no less than 30,000 of the native inhabitants fell victims to its bite.

The spring salmon angling has been, on the whole, well above the average of recent years, all the kingdom over, from the Tay and rivers of Scotland further north right down to the Hampshire Avon. The Welsh Wye is keeping up its recent reputation of a greatly improved river, and in the Shannon in Ireland some very heavy fish have been taken. Trout, on the other hand, do not seem to have come into good condition quite so soon as some hopeful people expected them to do, as a consequence of the genial winter. Perhaps the cold at the latter end of March, which certainly seemed to delay the hatch of fly, served to keep the trout back also; but it is by no means sure that a good crisp, frosty spring is not better calculated to restore their energies than a more open season.

The town of Verona is doing a great and laudable work in carrying out the excavations of the old Roman theatre, which were commenced, but never completed, in 1834 and the few years following. The theatre stands on the left bank of the Adige, below the Castle of San Pietro, the rock on which that fortress is built forming a natural background for the theatre. It is older than the famous arena or amphitheatre of Verona, and was used only for plays and for witnessing the water regattas held on the Adige. Built in a semi-circle, it covers an area of 14,784 mètres square, while its façade was 111 mètres in length. It dates from the time of Augustus Cæsar, and was lavishly decorated with marbles from Greece, Africa, and Asia, a contrast in this way to the arena, where no marbles were used except those found in the quarries around Verona.

The theatre was formed of huge steps of granite, above which were rows of private boxes, one of which stands in its original position, in excellent preservation, and with the name of the owner carved on it. Above the tiers of private boxes rose the places where the plebeians were seated, and from where they looked down on to the stage or away to the water-jousts on the river. At the back of the theatre runs a huge passage, used indeed, as a drain to carry off the moisture from the bedrock on which San Pietro stands. This semi-natural, semi-artificial fosse extends for 70 mètres; its depth is 14 mètres, and its width is rather more than 1½ mètre. An immense number of houses have been demolished in order to carry on the excavations, which will take, it is supposed, from two to three years to finish perfectly. It is a great scheme, and when it is completed Verona will boast of one of the finest and grandest Roman monuments of that kind in the world.

SPES ULTIMA.

*Vos manet, o fessi rerum, sbes ultima mortis
Æternum que ferens somnum lethale papaver.*

The savour and scent of all the blooms of spring,

The trembling leaves and shy reluctant hues,
Speak but of hope, of joy that the year will bring,
Of a world of summer swimming in silver dews.

They speak not at all of rest, of the end of breath,

The twilight time when day's hot dust is laid,
And tired children turn to the arms of death,
Thankful and sure of slumber and unafraid.

There is a delicate flower all flowers above,
Deep red in the golden harvest the sickles reap,
Fragile as hope, and transient even as love,
Yet it holds in its bosom the last great gift of sleep.

Wait but a while, a while and the spring is gone,
The burden and heat of the burning summer past;
And the poppy blooms as the autumn days come on,
With slumber and rest in its heart, deep rest at last.

If the world is hard, it is but for a season's space;
The aching thought with life shall be surely stilled;
For sleep without dreams at last is the poppy's grace,
The kind unawakening night with peace fulfilled.

ROBIN FLOWER.

The great danger attending the use of a trailer was exemplified in a case which came before the West Surrey coroner on Monday. An accident had occurred in a manner typical of many others. The owner of a bicycle had taken an elderly lady for a ride in a trailer which he dragged behind. As he was approaching the cross roads of Byfleet and Cobham, he suddenly saw a motor-car approaching, and turned sharply to the right, with the result that the trailer was overturned and its occupant thrown out and killed. It did not appear from the evidence given that the motor-car had touched either the bicycle or the trailer, but it has to be noticed that the cyclist did not know that the trailer had been overturned until he had gone on about ten yards. Here we have a vivid illustration of the dangers attending this mode of travelling. There is not sufficient communication between the trailer and the rider; in the second place, the trailer is very apt to capsize when a sudden turn is necessary; and, in the third place, even if it is turned slowly it is more likely to come into collision than it would be if the occupant had any control over the wheels. The accident is a deplorable one, and it ought to serve as an example to those who are in the habit of somewhat thoughtlessly offering their friends a ride in a trailer.

The other day Sir Frederick Bridge wrote a very interesting letter to *The Times*. It appears that at half-past four in the morning he was awakened in his house at the Little Cloisters by the loud singing of a thrush, and he tells us that he never, during a residence of thirty years, before had heard one in the Abbey grounds. He had the curiosity to get up and look at the little songster, which was carolling from the top of the tree that hangs

over the fountain, so that there could be no mistake about its identity. It was a pleasant little experience, and well worthy of being recorded. Song-birds appear to be so happy in the London parks and gardens that it is no wonder if they wander at times into the more thickly inhabited parts of the town. Those who get up early in the morning, before the noise and traffic of London have begun, have an opportunity of witnessing many scenes in natural history which would scarcely be credited by those who spend the night in the glare of electric light, and are accustomed to sleep on till the freshness of the morning has passed away.

It would be very interesting to make a collection of the words that have been added to our national vocabulary by the agency of politics. One of the latest is Birreligion, used by a dignitary of the Church to describe what the Minister of Education means to have taught in schools. It will be curious to notice how far this word repeats the history of boycotting, which came into use from the measures that were taken to deal with Captain Boycott. Strangely enough, the unpleasant vocabulary invented by fiscal controversialists seems to have died a natural death, as we seldom hear now either of whole

hoggers, little piggers, or the rest of the singular menagerie. It will be noticed that Mr. Birrell himself gave the word a new shade of meaning when he talked of a "provided school." This phrase, at least, promises to become very common in the future.

Mr. Arthur Lowry, one of the inspectors under the Local Government Board, has made a report on labour bureaux which is of very great interest. After giving certain figures referring to the work they have done, he draws the conclusion that a bureau which is merely passive is not likely to be very effectual. He protests against connecting the bureaux with the relief of distress, and asks his readers not to forget that a labour bureau can do nothing to increase the amount of employment. What it can do is to decrease the period of time during which employer and employed are looking for one another. He holds, therefore, that these institutions should be occupied solely with the normal labour market, and considers that the personality of the superintendent is the most important factor. It is necessary for him to enjoy the confidence alike of the workmen and their masters, and to secure this he must have his full share of tact and common-sense. The report throws a good deal of light on a kind of office from which, perhaps, many people expect more than it can give.

THE WOMEN

SOMEONE has said that what is unchanging in a nation is always derived from its womankind. The thrift of the French, the courage of the Scots, the sensibility of the Irish may all be traced to the one constant and continuous characteristic that has distinguished and still distinguishes the women of those races from others. In Holland woman's influence is not less clearly definable than elsewhere. It is based on the great national characteristic of domesticity and love of home. The Dutch ideal is a comfortable, clean, and well-managed house; it is consequently quite natural that woman's influence should be very great in the social and private

OF HOLLAND.

life of Holland. Women do not intrude in politics. There are no Women's Righters or Suffragettes at the Hague or Amsterdam; but, on the other hand, the Dutch women are mistresses over their own households, and everything in the training of the young is arranged by their order. They are thus the moulders of the national character, and it is not very surprising if beside their taciturn and certainly undemonstrative lords and masters they give foreigners the impression of being by far the superior half of the nation.

There are Dutch women, however, and Dutch women. It is not a little curious, for instance, that the inhabitants of Zealand



M. Emil Frechon.

MAIDENS INDUSTRIOUS.

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in the south and Friesland in the north, unlike in every other particular, have preserved their national costume in a way that those of none of the other five provinces have done. In the intermediate zone there has been a levelling up to what may be called a modern standard of costume. Originality in apparel has been stamped out, and uniformity is the idea of the generality. But it is otherwise in Friesland and in Zealand. In Leeuwarden, the capital of the former province, the women in every stage of life from girlhood to old age wear helmets or, more correctly,

reason, to be the best-looking in Holland. It must also be added that they are apparently ignorant of the fact, and their simplicity is perhaps their chief attractiveness. Some of these casques, without the additional chains and pins, are computed to have cost as much as £30. It is usual for a young man on becoming engaged to present his betrothed with a new casque, and perhaps this practice originated in the custom of the young woman on receiving an offer leaving the room and returning in her casque if she accepted the proposal. Of course



M. Emil Frechon.

FISHWIVES ON THE QUAY.

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close-fitting casques of gold or silver. The metal is, except for the very poor, not imitation, but real, and it need scarcely be said, as the people are Dutch, that it is kept as bright as rubbing and polishing will make it. Naughty boys are affirmed sometimes to breathe on their sisters' casques and make them dull, whereupon there is much repolishing and burnishing, even in the open street.

The effect of this strange headgear is not diminished by the fact that the women of Friesland are said, and not without

the general desire is that the casque should be of gold. It is said that the gold-crowned beauties look down on their silver-casqued sisters with condescension, as would be the case all the world over. Among the very poor, of course, there are neither gold nor silver casques, only copper or nickel-plate; but the very poor scarcely exist in Holland, and not at all in Friesland. Education and cosmopolitanism are attacking these customs in their last fortress. Ladies of position even in Friesland no longer wear the casque every day, whereas their mothers and grandmothers



Copyright

MILKMAIDS IN ZEALAND.

M. Emil Frechon.

thought most of establishing their social superiority by decorating them with diamonds.

Friesland is the citadel of Dutch liberty. The old motto of the province declares that "the Frisians shall be free as long as the wind blows over the North Sea." It is a great plain, stretching as far as the eye can see, without a hill or even an undulation, and it can be seen to the furthermost corner where the great sea dyke restrains the German Ocean. But in Zealand the contrast is marked. It is not a plain, but a hollow, protected by dyke within dyke, which surround the polders with a succession of ramparts, and beyond them are the canals that constitute the high-roads of the Netherlands. From the canals nothing can be seen save the green mounds on either side, and now and then the revolving arms of a windmill or the spire of a church. Yet behind these mounds is a land won from the sea, as its name implies, but flowing, as it were, "with milk and honey," rich in pasture, with countless herds,

and they stand out from the cheeks very conspicuously. Over the circlet a large cap of muslin and lace is worn, and it hangs down on the back and shoulders. Sometimes ornaments like those over the ears are worn on the forehead as well. It is the pride of the women of Zealand to possess valuable earrings, just as it is of their Northern kinswomen to own golden casques. Sometimes earrings, such as are worn in other countries, are hung by a chain to the row dependent from the circlet, but in no case does the ear appear to be pierced. The origin of the custom of wearing these ornaments has never been satisfactorily explained, but there are some, probably facetious, persons who allege that they were introduced to protect the Zealand beauties from the impudent advances of the Spanish, or even Roman, soldiers, for everything is ancient in this land that is still enveloped, as it were, in the atmosphere of the sixteenth century.

When she goes away from her home, or, at least, on a journey, the Zealand woman puts over her cap and circlet a straw hat, very tall, like a Welsh hat, and ornamented with many ribbons. The effect of this head-gear is, undoubtedly, to destroy the picturesqueness of the cap and ornaments. Another feature in the dress of the women of this province is the richly-embroidered chemise, which is fully exhibited by the dress or bodice being cut to show it off. Finally, their sleeves are cut short above the elbow, so that their arms, of which the Zealand women are rightly very proud, are always left bare.

In the province of Holland something of the same style of headdress prevails, only flowers, rosettes, and even bunches of hair are introduced to ornament the cap or hat, while a great number of necklaces, brooches, and bracelets attest the wealth of the owner. At Alkmaar, to whose fair ladies the great Napoleon paid a compliment which subsequent visitors have never been able to endorse, the headdress is again overshadowed by the tapering, pottle-shaped straw hat, rendered more formidable by a broad brim lined with silk. Alkmaar is famous for its cheese markets and kermesses. The Dutch kermesse, or, more strictly, kermis, is an itinerant country fair, which moves from place to place in due succession. It never lasts more than a week in any one place, and to prohibit it would, it is said, provoke a revolution. Still, the kermis has become more or less of a national orgy, in which those who take part in the festivities of both sexes deem it compulsory to get drunk. The wheel earrings and forehead ornaments are then needed to protect the fair representatives of the ancient provinces not against a foreign soldiery, but against their own countrymen.



M. I mil Frechon.

DUTCH PEASANTS.

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prosperous farmsteads, and inhabited by a happy and wealthy people. In this land, invisible from the outside, which has been accumulating resources for several centuries, there are old-world scenes that recall rural England, fine trees, pleasant lanes, and charming ancient farmhouses, not to be found in any other part of Holland. In Friesland all is bare, grey, and sombre, although the cultivator wins his livelihood, and more than that, from the ungrateful soil. In Zealand there are grateful shade, verdant colouring, and a landscape that, however restricted in size, cannot be measured by the eye. The wheat crop of Zealand is among the largest per acre in the world. The costume of the women of Zealand approximates to that of those of Friesland. If it would be going too far to call the head ornament here a casque, there is a circlet of gold, silver, or copper in general use, from which depend the earrings that are the chief pride of the women of Zealand. These earrings are unlike any others. They are generally formed of a spiral of five or six rows,

What is truly remarkable in Holland is that the social distinctions and grades among women are not very perceptible. The "boeren," or peasant women, buy things for their houses or their personal adornment on just as lavish a scale as their titular superiors. In a public market the wife of a merchant or professional man has been known to ask the price of a measure of silk for a dress, and on declaring it to be too dear, a boeren standing by has come forward and said "I will buy it." This is evidence, if any were needed, of the pleasure women derive from the expenditure of part of their income on luxury and ostentation. A few days can be enjoyedly spent in these interesting old-world places, which are only a few hours' journey from England. Leaving London by way of Harwich in the evening, Amsterdam, the Dutch capital, is reached in time for breakfast the next morning. From Amsterdam there is one of the most interesting tours by steam tram, motor and sailing boats to Monnikenham, Marken, Volendam, and Edam.

A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

AT this period of the year the eye of the town-dweller turns longingly to those distant parts of our island where the verges of the land or the little islands that lie adjacent are being washed by waves as gentle as those of midsummer; and for that reason Mr. Hope Moncrieff's book, *The Highlands and Islands of Scotland* (Black), will receive a cordial welcome. Not that we think it by any means a work of genius, or even of very high talent. It requires something more than a fluent pen and a knowledge of the petty intrigues and petty strife of the Highland clans to unfold the charm of those districts dealt with by the author. In good sooth, the visitor to them in the favourite months of summer is likely to be grossly disappointed. The Highlands and islands are overrun with a most undesirable class of tourists. Mr. Moncrieff talks of their being Cockney, but, as a matter of fact, the most objectionable of them speak the unmistakable lingo of the Glasgow Salt Market. Over-dressed, loud voiced, strident, and aggressive, they spread over the most beautiful parts of Scotland like a plague of locusts, and have caused to spring into being a class of hotels expressly framed to minister to the worst of their appetites. One has often wished, when staying at an hotel in the Highlands, that the good host were more of a native and less of a Cockney; but the hope was ever met with melancholy disappointment. Those expensive hotels in districts that Scott first rendered famous are for the most part modelled on the second or third rate London restaurant. Indeed, it were not unreasonable to assume that a great deal of the food set before the unfortunate tourist is purchased in London. At any rate, we have more than once found the salmon to be high in a hostelry with first-class pretensions standing adjacent to a salmon river, and in the same inn (by the by, the proprietor would be offended by hearing it called an inn) there is an endless series of courses at dinner, while lunch and breakfast would delight the heart of the City clerk. Now we venture to say that in this mine host is making a mistake of judgment. If he would place on the table the fare of the neighbourhood, say, the leg of a sheep that had grazed on the neighbouring mountains, a fish newly caught in the river that runs past the very door, or in the lake that stretches away on the other side of the high road, the man who did not prefer this wholesome fare to the kickshaws and rubbish usually served up would have amply earned a period of starvation. But when Mr. Hope Moncrieff lifts up his burden against the Cockney visitor, he seems to forget that there has been a general "cocknification" of the once thrifty and frugal Scot. The people who used to make an honest livelihood there have left the country, and you will only find natives in quantity where the tourist is expected, because it can never be forgotten that picturesque Scotland, to a large extent, lives, speaking metaphorically, by taking in washing from visitors. That is one reason why we think visitors would do well to step over the usual convention, and visit these places early in the year. No doubt the country itself is scarcely so attractive; the heather is black, and the hills are otherwise bare and desolate; the brooks almost make you shiver, they look so cold when tumbling over the brown mountains. The hotels, too, are extremely uncomfortable. It is no secret that the servants in them are mostly engaged by what is called the season, and the furniture in most of the rooms is carefully covered up under cloth during the winter months. Moreover, there is an extremely inadequate service, and the stranger who expects to find "a' the comforts o' the saut market in the Hielants" will certainly be disappointed; but then, if he attaches the highest importance to these luxuries, it would be much better for him to stay in town and enjoy them at his club or hotel. Should he, on the contrary, be content with simple fare, in order to see the country unpolluted by myriads of tourists, while he himself is undistracted by their uproar, he will find ample reward for a certain amount of self-denial. Take a place like Connell Ferry, near Oban, and think of it as it is during the days of Easter week. The famous Falls made by the incoming and the outgoing tide are as full of charm and music as they can possibly be in the height of the season. The hills, it is true, are bare, and there are few wild flowers to lend colour or magic to the scene; but the contours of the hills are unchanged, and in the very solitude there are a beauty and a peace unattainable in less remote haunts. This holds equally true of an island like Skye. In summer it is, as a matter of fact, on show from beginning to end. Even the tenants of the picturesque cottages, with the fires burning in the centre of the room, are perfectly well aware of the material advantages coming to them on account of visitors, and are so sophisticated that one may at times be forgiven for wondering if the cottage and its walls, the fire and the inmates were not more or less in the way of being just "properties," and the whole scene got up to amaze and delight the visitor from the South. But to stay in one of the islands in winter is to learn something of the rough nature of the inhabitants, because no sooner has the last trip boat gone away, and the summer coaches been stopped, than the thrifty islanders resume their

ordinary and natural mode of living. They count up the gains that have accrued from the summer visitors, and proceed, if they are thrifty, to make themselves comfortable therewith during the weary months of winter. But even here not every citizen is so prudent. However, we are wandering away a good deal from our author, who really does not touch upon the important question we have been discussing. It may be interesting to mention what Mr. Hope Moncrieff writes about, and the reader may like to know that there is plenty of lore about pibrochs and coronachs. He is not a fanatical Celt, as the following passage will be sufficient to show:

The most widely famed Macpherson in modern days was that author or editor of "Ossian." If any of this clan desire more unquestioned renown, let him invent some defence of proof against the midges that are the most bloodthirsty swarms of the Highlands, now that the pibroch and the coronach die away in dance music.

He gives a logical and slightly material reason for the picturesque superstition characteristic of the Highlands:

The student of mankind needs little research to fashion such shadowy images as come so ready to the mind's eye, "where every object of Nature, even the unreasoning dreams of sleep, are mirrors which flash back death"; and from the Highlander's misty shrouds of moor and sea, from the wreaths of his swollen waters, from ominous lights burning on cruel waves, from ghostly stirrings and tappings about his lone home, he may well have turned to the faith preached by St. Columba.

The following passage is quoted as giving in a succinct manner one of the principal interests of the Orkney Islands:

The most famous lion here is the Stones of Stennis, a circle of sacrifice, sepulture, or what not, second only to Stonehenge in our islands. On the opposite side of the deep double inlet of Stennis, half fresh and half salt water, stand or lie ruins of a similar circle, near which a modern Vandal has demolished the "Stone of Od n," where Minna Troil would have pledged her faith to Cleveland by clasping hands through the opening of a pierced obelisk, gentler rite than that carving a captive foe's back into "a red eagle," for which one of these stones once made a scaffold. Not far off is the famous Maeshowe tumulus, whose mysterious runes have tried the ingenuity of many interpreters. Similar chambered mounds, "fairy howes" to the people, are found nearer Kirkwall, as in other islands, all over which may be encountered grey, grim, and solitary standing stones, bearded with moss, which are kith and kin to the prehistoric obelisks of Stennis.

WILD COUNTRY LIFE.

THE REDSTART'S RETURN.

ON March 25th I saw, near Birkling Farm, on the Sussex coast, the first restart of the season. This seems to me a somewhat unusually early return for this migrant, which, as rule, is not noted until April. April 3rd was hitherto my earliest record of the appearance of this charming little bird. This March one was a male bird, the female, as most observers are aware, arriving on these shores a few days later than their lords. The "firetail," as country lads still call the redstart, seems to me to be less abundant than I remember it in my younger days.

HABITS OF THE REDSTART.

As I watched, on the last Sunday in March, this first restart of the season, I wondered to myself from what far country it had made its way. For this bird is a great wanderer, and in winter seeks such distant regions as the North of Africa—nay, it penetrates even so far down as Senegambia, on the West Coast—Palestine, and even Persia. I am inclined to rate the song of this beautiful bird somewhat higher than the place usually assigned to it would suggest. It is sweet and, to me, distinctly musical, not greatly inferior to that of the white-throat and other warblers. Redstarts consume large quantities of insects, often hawking after them in mid-air, very much after the fashion of the fly-catcher. No better evidence of the value of such insectivorous birds as these can be adduced than a recent note contributed by Dr. Alfred Nicholls of Roseau, Dominica, to a catalogue of the birds of that island, lately printed by Mr. A. Hyatt Verrell. "The American redstart," says Dr. Nicholls, "has been observed by me on two occasions to arrive in flocks. On one occasion a flock of from thirty to forty of these birds stayed in my garden at Roseau for a whole day, and they entirely cleared away a scale insect that was then badly infesting my rubiacious plant."

SCARCITY OF WHEATEARS.

If redstarts may possibly be, here and there, in places, scarcer than they were forty years ago, there is no question that the wheatear is, on the South Downs, one of its greatest strongholds, distinctly far less abundant than it used to be. I have talked with South Down shepherds who have been familiar with these birds for years, and have, until past middle age, snared hundreds of dozens of them. These men are quite clear that the wheatear migration has greatly lessened in the last twenty or thirty years. In Pennant's time—the latter half of the eighteenth century—as many as 1,840 dozen of these birds were computed to have been taken on the downs near Eastbourne alone during the autumn season, when the birds were gathering for their return migration. From my own observation I am convinced that it would be utterly impossible to obtain anything approaching that quantity at the present time, were snaring permitted. I do not think the capture of these birds for the table has had much to do with this diminution of numbers. It was carried on for centuries in Sussex and Dorset, yet the numbers of wheatears seem to have been always well maintained. The decrease seems to have taken place mainly since the practice of snaring has been falling into desuetude. Snaring is now, of course, forbidden by law, and very few birds are taken at all. A change in the migration of this bird is, I believe, alone answerable for the falling off in the numbers of wheatears now so evident upon the Southern Downs of England. Even in the last dozen years wheatears seem to me to be scarcer than they used to be.

TRUFFLE DOGS AND TRUFFLES.

I suppose that here and there there are still to be found in England dogs which may be truthfully described as truffle dogs. There was—and, I believe, still is—in Wiltshire a remnant of a distinct breed of these animals. The breed was of considerable antiquity, and was said to have been derived from Spanish ancestry brought to this country by fugitives or emigrants many years ago. The type more resembled the poodle than any other breed, the colour being usually white, with black or liver-coloured markings. The coat was close curled, while the ears were drooping. The lips and roof of the mouth were black, and the tail so short as to be almost lacking. If any of my readers know of such an animal now employed as a truffle-hunter in this country, it would be interesting to obtain and print a photograph. I know that ten years ago such dogs existed. Unless, however, the strain has been fortified and refreshed by foreign importations, it is likely that it is becoming increasingly scarce. English truffles are, of course, nothing like so fine in quality as those found in France and Spain, especially in the neighbourhood of Perigord in the former country. Yet they exist, and some few people know how to find them. Chalk is the right soil for these delicious fungi, and the combination of chalk and beech trees is, where other things are favourable, the right and perfect one. But these curious growths may be found also under oaks, and even, folk say, occasionally cedars. The truffle is, however, a mysterious vegetable, and requires most delicate conjunction of favouring causes to produce itself in anything like abundance. Probably in the days when Saxon swineherds tended their charges through the immense beech forests of Southern Britain, truffles were much more abundant than they now are.

SAND-MARTINS AND HOT SUMMERS.

The first sand-martins have already arrived for the season, and those who are curious upon the point may now attempt to test for themselves the truth of the statement that in very hot, dry summers the colonies of these birds choose for their nesting-places the south side of a sand-pit, so as to escape the inevitable baking which would follow if the northern bank were fixed upon. That sand-martins do shift their nesting-places in different seasons is well known, and that quite apart from such temporary disturbing factors as the digging of sand or gravel from the pits in which they settle themselves. Whether they actually have an intuitive knowledge of the approach of an unusually hot season it is hard to say. Facts and evidences certainly seem to point to that conclusion. I know that in the spring preceding the tremendously dry summer of 1893—one of the hottest and finest English summers of the nineteenth century—sand-martins in more than one locality shifted their nesting-places, and fixed their colonies in the southern instead of the northern bank of the sand-pit to which they had resorted.

CONCERNING GOLDCRESTS.

The autumn migration of these beautiful little birds on our East Coast seems for some years past to have been considerably less than many of those reported in the last century. From my own limited observation, goldcrests have not for some time been so plentiful in winter as they used to be. Probably our shores will receive, within the next few years, some of those vast migratory waves of these birds which will restore the balance, and make us think for a season or two that they are more plentiful than ever. We have, of course, goldcrests with us throughout the year, but their numbers are always largely increased by the autumn migration from the pine forests of North Europe. The years 1882-83-84 were all notable for large immigrations of these tiny, yet hardy, little creatures. But the flight of October, 1882, probably far surpassed any others of the century. On the 24th and 25th of that month many thousands of goldcrests reached the Northumbrian and Durham coast, so fatigued by their long flight and an

unfavourable shift of wind that, on alighting, they were literally unable to rise again from the ground. Now and again, but much more rarely—as in 1882—we get a big spring wave of these tiny visitants.

A NORSK LEGEND OF THE GOLDCREST.

The Norwegians have a very curious legend concerning this little bird and its brilliant orange crest. They say that the Fuglekonig (king of the birds), as they call the golden-crested wren, once came to a great meeting of all the fowls of the air, gathered for the election of a king. The eagle proudly put himself forward for the title, but his claims were hotly contested by many other birds. Finally it was settled that whichever bird soared farthest into the sky should be declared king. The eagle swept upward, but as he went a tiny goldcrest settled on his back, and, unknown to the great raptor, was carried aloft. Presently the eagle, distancing all competitors, had reached nearly to the sun. At that moment when the bird of prey had gained so dangerous an altitude, the goldcrest flew up, struck the sun with his head, and burnt a patch of feathers. Felled to the earth, he presently recovered himself, and, putting in his claim, was there and then declared the king of the birds. His golden crest and short tail—of which he had lost a portion during his fall—remain, say the Norwegians, clear evidences of his great achievement.

H. A. B.

MARKINGS AND COLOUR PROTECTION IN FISH.

FEW members of the animal kingdom have so many enemies as the fish. Preyed on by man, beast, and bird, devoured by their own kith and kin, the balance in fish-life would not be long maintained if it were not for the facts that fish are so prolific, and that they possess in a greater degree than any of the higher vertebrates the power of changing their colour and markings, so as to simulate their surroundings. These changes in colour and markings are brought about by



STONE LOACH IN AN UNNATURAL POSITION.

the alteration in size and arrangement of the numerous pigment cells present in the skin of the fish. First we have the slow changes that occur in fish which for generations have occupied

surroundings of a similar nature, e.g., the stone loach. This fish is usually found on the gravelly bed of a rippling stream, and the pigment cells have become so arranged as to resemble the mottled markings on the stones. In the first photograph, that of a loach perched on a stone, the protective arrangement of the pigment cells is shown on the body, tail, and fins; as this fish usually rests on the bottom, the under surface requires no protection, and so is devoid of dark pigment cells. It was a long time before the stone loach could be induced to lie in such an exposed position, and very soon he swam off, taking up his quarters as shown in the second photograph. Some fish, e.g., the trout, are to be found in localities of very different natures. In the case



STONE LOACH IN A NATURAL POSITION.

of trout inhabiting dark deep waters, the black pigment cells slowly increase, and the red and yellow disappear, the converse being the case with trout found in a clear running stream with a gravelly bottom.

Again, as I illustrated by photography in these columns on May 24th, 1904, the young pike has numerous yellow bars across his body, these bars so much resembling the stems of the reeds among which he lies that he is almost invisible. As the pike grows stronger and bigger there is not the same risk of his being devoured, and so he moves out into the more open water, the markings at the same time altering so as to suit his new surroundings, by the yellow pigment cells disappearing at regular intervals along the bars across the body, the stripes of the young fish being thus converted into the spots of the adult fish. The above changes, like all developments, are gradual, but in addition fish have the power of becoming rapidly light or dark, according to their surroundings, by the rapid contraction or relaxation of already existing pigment cells.

Some years ago I heard of several trout that were turned into a stream; of these the majority were bright and light in colour, but a few were found to be quite dark; these dark fish were blind. The supposed explanation was that light through the optic nerve caused a reflex stimulation of the nerve endings in the skin, resulting in a contraction of the dark pigment cells, and so the healthy fish were light in colour. This stimulation being absent in the blind fish, the dark pigment cells remained relaxed,

colour. To prove this theory I tried the following experiment with a healthy pike that I happened at the time to have. I obtained a wooden tank, 4ft. long and 6in. deep. The bottom and sides were painted with white enamel.

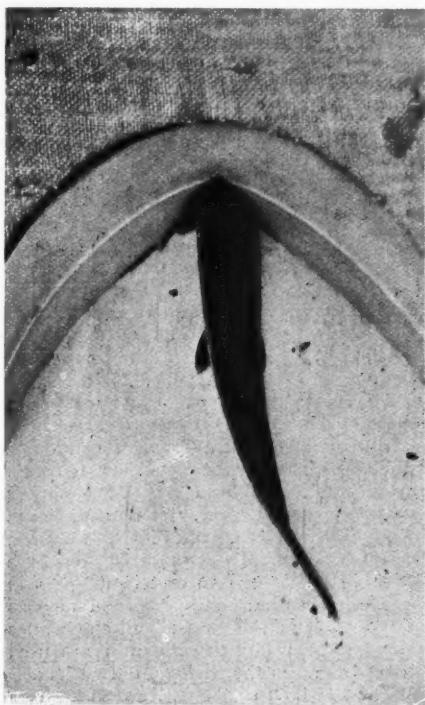
Across the tank I placed a partition, with an arch cut out of the bottom of the partition sufficiently large to admit the body of the pike, the arch being in contact with the bottom of the tank. On one side of the partition the tank was left open, on the other side it was covered up so as to form a dark chamber. The pike was first placed with his head in the dark chamber, the body and the tail being in the light, sufficient water having been put in the tank just to cover the fish; he remained in this position, in bright sunshine, for two hours, and it will be seen in the photograph that the parts exposed to the light are quite dark, and no markings are visible. The fish was then turned round, and in three minutes a second photograph was taken. The markings were now quite distinct, and the pike appeared lighter in colour than even the photograph represents it.

The above experiment proves beyond doubt that light does not directly cause a

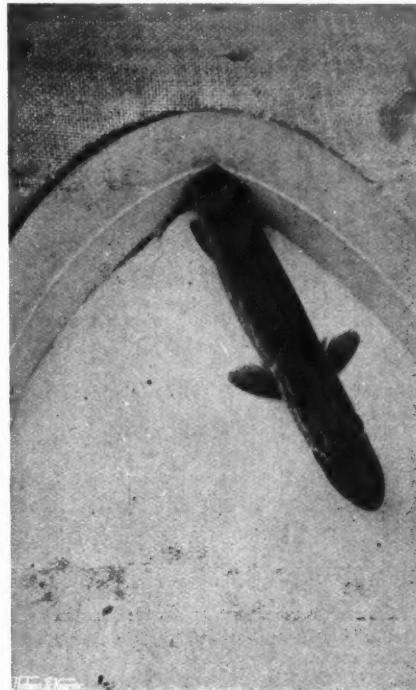
contraction of the pigment cells, and, taken in conjunction with the incident of the blind fish, it proves that the stimulus which causes contraction of the pigment cells is received through the eye. There

appeared to me, however, to be some doubt as to the means by which the light stimulus received by the eye was conveyed to the pigment cells. It might be, as already mentioned, a reflex stimulation of the nerves supplying the skin, or the stimulus might be conveyed by the numerous nerves running in a duct described in the next few lines, and thence to the skin. Down each side of a fish runs, from the head to the caudal fin, a series of perforated scales. This line of perforations is known as the lateral line. The perforations in the scales communicate below with a duct, which, commencing in the bones of the skull, just below the eye, runs down each side of the body and tail to the caudal fin. The main function of this duct is undoubtedly to secrete mucus to lubricate the fish, and thus let him slip easily through the water; but in it also run numerous nerves, and commencing, as this duct does, close to the eye, it was possible that the nerves in this duct might influence pigment cell contraction. It is only recently that I have convinced myself that this is not so.

A big pike was brought to me which had been badly gaffed; the duct below the lateral line was torn, and the wound extended through the skin towards the back. This fish had been caught about six hours, and appeared to be dead. He was placed in a large bath, the water was thoroughly aerated round his head with a bicycle pump, and weak whisky and water was poured down his mouth every ten minutes. Gradually the fish revived, and I left him lazily swimming in the bath. Next morning the skin of the pike was quite light in colour, owing to the bath



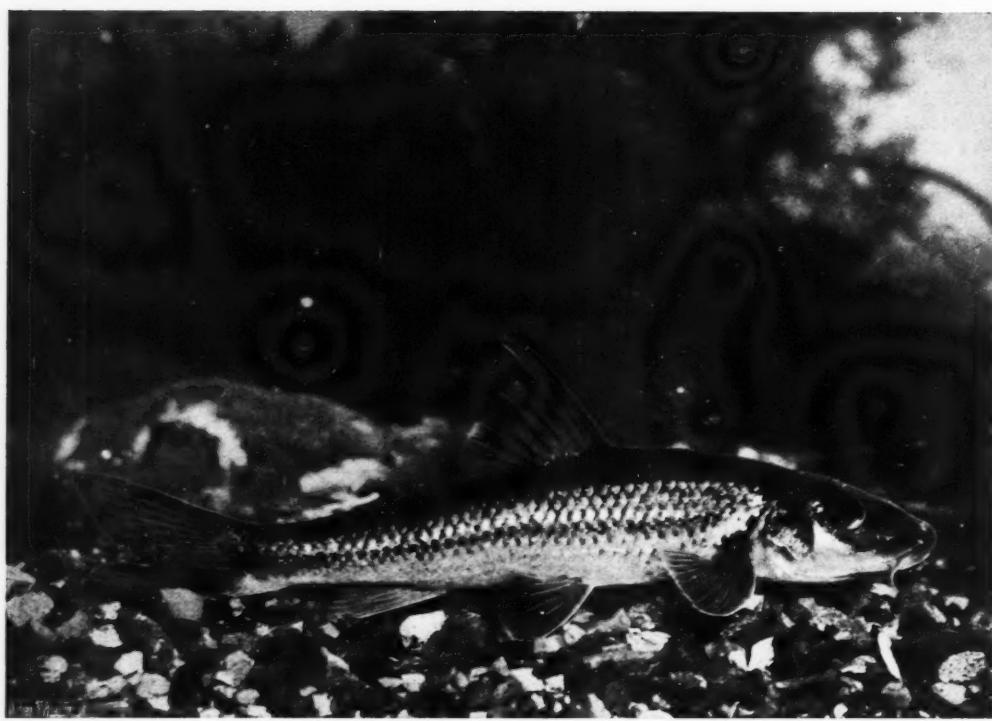
HEAD IN DARK CHAMBER.



HEAD IN THE LIGHT.



PIKE: BARS CHANGING TO SPOTS.



GUDGEON, SHOWING LATERAL LINE.

being painted white, except for a dark triangular patch on his side, the base of the triangle being the wound made by the gaff. Beyond the patch the fish was light in colour; proving that the nerves in the duct below the lateral line do not control the contraction of the pigment cells, and that it was merely the division of the ordinary cutaneous nerves that caused the dark triangular patch. These facts are probably well established, but the demonstration of them by photography may be new to some of the readers of COUNTRY LIFE who are interested in fish. FRANCIS WARD.

SYNONYMS OF . . . ENGLISH PLANTS.

WELL have one registered baptismal name—legally, rightfully ours—and only one; but many among us—particularly those whose lines have fallen among a houseful of brothers and sisters, or many school companions—have secondary names, not recognised by the registrar and the Church, but names which are probably more familiar to us and to our contemporaries than our formal ones. We may, for instance, be Algernon Vavasour Smith or Margaret Patricia Jones by rights; but we may answer far more readily to Curly or Jack, Daisy or Peggy, or what not, than to our lawful patronymic.

So with the plants. Every plant that blows has a learned, sonorous Latin name, recognised by the Powers-that-Be in all lands and whatever be their mother tongue; but its friends mostly know it by some pet name, from the appeal that it makes to their affections, or by a name given, like many of our nick-names, in allusion to some peculiarity or fancied resemblance that is seen in it. And these familiar names of the plants are often of great antiquity, whose origin speaks of customs and beliefs long since dead; or perhaps the meaning has even been forgotten through the changing years, or is only dimly recalled by antiquarians. Some of these names, too, have a wide range, and are in use throughout the whole country; others belong just to some one locality, and a single plant may probably boast of quite a number of familiar names, each of which is applied according to the locality in which the particular specimen in question may be growing. A comparison of these plant synonyms is most interesting, and shows how, here, one idiosyncrasy is emphasised, how, there, another is brought forward, while unexpected and unthought-of peculiarities in some plant may suddenly be brought home to us as we search for the reason of one of its country names.

Perhaps no plant boasts of so many pet names as the Pansy, or *Viola tricolor*, which looks so preternaturally wise and quaint. Heartsease some call it, and that is perhaps its prettiest name; but its almost human expression has also suggested Biddy's Eyes, Three-faces-in-a-hood, Godfather and Godmother, and even, rather unkindly, Monkey Face, as sobriquets. The country lads and lasses love its little old-fashioned face, so they call it Cuddle-me-to-you, or Cull-me, or Call-me-to-you. Some of

them are even more ardent in their affection, and to them the pansy is Kiss-me-ere-I rise. But surely the quaintest and the most cumbersome of plant pet names is its old one of Meet-her-i-th'-entry, Kiss-her-i-th'-buttery, which for nonsense and length is perhaps unequalled in plant nomenclature. Its name of Stepmother is due to a little make-believe story of the children, "For," they repeat, looking at the pansy, "stepmother sat up in her green chair in purple and gold; her own two children are dressed in gay yellow, and have each a little chair on either side of her; but her two step-children are in dull colours, and have only one small stool between them; while the poor father in a red nightcap is kept out of sight in the very middle of the flower." The Stepmother is, of course, the large petal, and the children are the four smaller ones, while the "poor father" is the scarlet-tipped group of stamens in the centre.

The Daisy (*Bellis perennis*), says the botanist, but nobody

else), popular and well known though it is, seems very poor in common names, perhaps because no name can possibly fit it better than its familiar one of Day's Eye, cautiously opening at dawn and closing sleepily at dusk, as it does. But, occasionally in the North, it has been called Boneflower or Banwurt, because, asserts an old writer, "it helpeth bones to knyt agayne." It is sometimes known, too, as Herb Margaret, like the French marguerite, after St. Margaret of Cortona, the saint who had charge of those suffering from certain diseases in which the daisy was supposed to be efficacious, and also as Cockiloorie, because it "lies hid in the sward" all the winter (koka = sward, lura = to be hid); but these names are used rarely, and will soon be only found in the pages of old writers.

The little Wild Geranium, which peeps with rosy face from out the hedgerows, has hosts of names, for its Latin dignity of *Geranium robertianum* becomes in common talk Herb Robert, Robin in the Hedge, Robin Hood, little Red Robin, and Ragged Robin, the last because its leaves have a somewhat torn appearance. Herb Robert, perhaps its most familiar name, is believed to have been given it because it cured Robert, the famous Duke of Normandy, of some illness, and we find, even in writings of the thirteenth century, that it is spoken of as *Herba Roberti*. Country folks at times refer to it as Stinking Bob, but this is certainly rather a libel on the little plant, and a pleasanter name is Jenny Wren or Wren's Flower, though why it obtained this name is not very clear, unless it is because it shares the hedge with the wren. Bachelor's Buttons or Billy Buttons are both rather apt, from its flat, round button-like flowers, and so is Stork's Bill, since, when the flowers fade, the fruits grow out until they closely resemble a number of miniature storks' bills.

The great hairy Mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*), which raises its primrose-coloured spike of flowers high by the roadside, has received many odd names, on account of its peculiar appearance. Some of these refer to its hairiness, such as Adam's Flannel—presumably from the idea that its woolly leaves were the only flannel available for Adam—Old Man's Flannel, or Fluffweed. Its straight upstanding stalk has led others to refer to it as Jupiter's, or Jacob's, or the Shepherd's Staff; while the fact that the stalk ends in pale yellow flowers has made still others see in it a resemblance to a torch or taper; so a very old name for it is Hag Taper, that is, Hedge Taper, and not, as has been asserted, because it served as a light for the witches by night. The Irish people prettily call it the Virgin Mary's Candle, while another of its names, Lady's Foxglove, probably also refers to Our Lady.

The Dandelion (*Dent-de-Lion*), whose Latin name, *Taraxacum Dens-leonis*, has a particularly sonorous sound, has a few very apposite popular names, such as the Clock, the Fortune Teller, and the Blowball, because of the well-known custom of telling time or answering fortune questions by the number of puffs of breath which will completely scatter its dainty, fluffy ball of parachute-provided fruits. Its name of Bitterwort alludes to its bitter juices, and that of Stink Davie (though why Davie?) to its unpleasant smell. Two other names that it possesses are interesting; one is Priest's Crown, because when the fruit-

have been blown away the round, naked receptacle recalls the shaven head of a priest; the second is Swine's Snout, from the fact that the fading flowers close up into a snout-like form before they are transfigured into the feathery ball of fruit.

The Willow-herb, whose formal name of *Epilobium* is not so unfamiliar as are many formal plant names, gives off a pleasant fresh smell from its flowers, young shoots, or bruised leaves; so its nicknames chiefly refer to this, and it becomes Codlings and Cream, Apple or Gooseberry Pie, or Custard Cups, in country parlance. An ancient and curious name for this plant is Son-before-his-father, the reason of which was given many years ago by a quaint old writer: "It has long husks in which the seeds are contained, (and these) do come forth and waxe great before that the floure openeth."

The Wild Clematis (*Clematis vitalba*), whose long trailing shoots climb over the hedgerows and beautify them with myriads of delicate feathery fruit, is first put on record by Gerard, some 300 years ago. He was so impressed by its "decking and adorning waies and hedges where people travell" that he named it the Traveller's Joy, a name that it still retains in some parts of England. But it has also other pretty names, such as Maiden Hair, from its gossamer fruit threads, and Silver Bush, because these threads turn a lovely silvery grey when mature, while as Snow-in-harvest it is easily recognisable by those who have looked down from a height in autumn and seen the great grey-white masses of its fruits lying on the tops of the hedges. Old Man's Beard is a less romantic name for it, but it is particularly apt when winter takes the silveriness out of its threads, and only the dull greyness is left. The twining nature of the plant has given it yet other names, such as Hedge Vine and Hag (*i.e.*, Hedge) Rope, while Love Bind expresses the same idea more poetically, and so does the Cumberland name of Robin Hood's Fetter. The Virgin's Bower and Lady's Bower both, too, are happy ones, for a little training will cause its graceful trailing shoots to form most fairy-like bowers. Boys' Bacca, Tombacca, and Smokewood are names referring to the practice country boys have of using its wood for the purpose of surreptitious smoking.

Some plants, instead of evoking affection and admiration, seem to inspire a certain measure of disgust, and then this feeling naturally finds expression in the names that have been commonly assigned to them. Thus the Man Orchis (*Orchis masculata*) has a variety of disagreeable names, due chiefly to its pale finger-like tubers which are found below the ground. So it is called Dead Man's Hand, or Dead Man's Fingers; "Our cold maids do Dead Man's Fingers call them," says Shakespeare in speaking of this plant. Sometimes, too, it is Dead Man's Thumb, because in certain parts of the country the children

whisper to each other that its root is the thumb of some unburied murderer. In the Roxburghe Ballads we have:

Then round the meddowes did she walke
Catching each flower by the stalk
Such as within the meddowes grew
As Dead Man's Thumbs and Harebells blew,

Goosey Gander, a Gloucester and Dorset name, and the Fool's Stone are two more of its uncomplimentary names.

The curious appearance of the Wild Arum (*Arum maculatum*) has called forth all manner of quaint appellations, measured only by the fertility of the imagination of the particular district in which it is found. Lords-and-Ladies is perhaps the commonest and best known, a lord having a purple spadix or column hidden within the green enfolding leaf, and a lady having a white one. Adam-and-Eve and Bobbin-and-Joan are sometimes used instead of Lords-and-Ladies, and have the same reference. Jack-in-the-Box, Parson (or Lamb)-in-a-Pulpit, and Schoolmaster all, too, refer to the spadix set apart, as it were, in the box or pulpit of the green spathe. Friar's Cowl or Priest's Hood were names used in our forefathers' time, "for it hath, as it were, a cape and a tongue in it," says the Grete Herball.

After all these elaborate and somewhat artificial names, it is quite refreshing to turn to the sweetness and simplicity of the pet names of the Speedwell (*Veronica*), whose charming little bright blue flowers, dotted among its lowly green foliage, are fitly called Angel's Eyes, Bird's Eye, Blue Eye, or Eyebright. The fact, too, that an infusion of its leaves is a decoction resorted to in primitive village home doctoring has resulted in its being known also as Poor Man's Tea. The Pimpernel (*Anagallis*) has a variety of familiar names, most of which refer to its customs with regard to the opening and closing of its flowers. It is so regular in its habits, opening in this country with such unfailing punctuality, in fine weather, about seven in the morning, and closing with equal regularity soon after two in the afternoon, that it is frequently referred to as the Shepherd's Watch, or the Shepherd's Hourglass, or even as the Shepherd's Sundial. But inasmuch as the plant is extremely sensitive to rain or damp, the flowers remain closed if the morning weather is bad or likely to be bad, or they will close on the approach of rain if they have already opened; hence it is also called the Shepherd's Warning, as it is supposed to serve as a barometer for his sheep-tending, and the Shepherd's Delight, because of the beneficial effect this timely warning must have. Its occasional name of Waywort is due to its preference for creeping in the poor soil along the edges of the wayside.

Another familiar weed is that most commonly known to us as Shepherd's Purse, but called *Capsella Bursa-pastoris* by the learned people, though after all they have merely translated



J. Ingham.

"A WILDERNESS OF SWEETS."

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the homely name into the Latin tongue. The Lady supplants the Shepherd in some parts of the country, though it is less familiar as the Lady's Purse. Both these names refer to the purse-like fruits which contain the money-seed. One very peculiar name for this plant is Mother's Heart, because of an old children's game associated with this same fruit. In the districts of the Eastern Border a child holds out a ripe fruit to a companion and invites him to "tak' a haud o' that." When he does so, the fruit immediately bursts, whereupon the inviter shouts, "You have broken your mother's heart."

But the list of synonyms for our English wild flowers and the stories in connection therewith might be prolonged almost indefinitely, and would make a book in the telling. So this

little article must be considered as a mere introduction to the subject—a suggestion for a holiday investigation for those who turn to the country for refreshment from the turmoil and strain of the town, or as a line of thought for those who, privileged to dwell close to Nature, yet seek ever fresh points of interest in their beloved plants. To those who love the flowers of our hedgerows and our fields these common names that the tradition of centuries has handed down cannot fail to be of interest, for they are a vital part of the relationship between us and our native flora, a living bond between English men and women and English flowers; they are names bound up with the home life of the nation, names rooted immovably in our mother tongue.

G. CLARKE NUTTALL.

THE ENGLISH LAMMING SEASON.



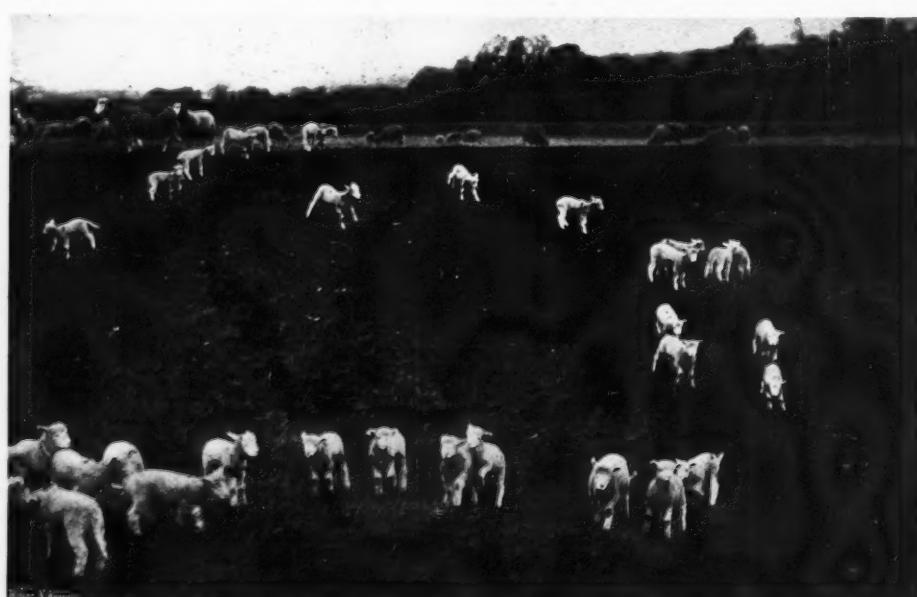
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LAMBS RACING.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

WHEN the young lambs are to be seen racing in the meadows, as shown in one of our pictures, it may be said that the lambing season is over, and that the time has come when it is possible to review it. But this is a very difficult matter, even when the fullest information is placed in our hands. England is not a large country, yet it presents great varieties of climate and the weather is often extremely local in its character, so that it is by no means unusual at one and the same time to find a part of the country complaining of drought and another part of too much moisture. And that is

not the only cause of variation; few countries possess such a large variety of breeds of sheep as our own does, and the season that is fairly suitable, say, to Dorset Horns may not be at all good for Border Leicesters. Moreover, it would require something in the nature of a census to enable us to speak with certainty as to the result of the season. From some farms we hear that this one has been remarkable for the small number of twin lambs born, and reports from Lincolnshire go even further. They say that this year a much larger proportion than usual of ewes have been barren altogether. The



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PLAYING UP AND DOWN A BANK.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

natural proportion of twins would be about one pair to every four single lambs; but the ratio, while it has been exceeded in some flocks, has not been nearly reached in others. In the Midlands, indeed, the lambing season is described as having been disastrous. If we take it as beginning in autumn, when the ewes are separated from the rams, the weather does not seem to have favoured sheep-breeding in that part of the country. One of the reasons, perhaps, was that there were times during last autumn when food was rather scarce; yet those months were succeeded by a very open mild winter that should have been favourable to the health of the flock. It was, however, just when the lambing season was at its height that the worst weather came. February, it will be remembered, was a very rainy month, and most shepherds will agree with us when we say that sheep do worse with excessive moisture than in the very wildest storms. The rainy February was succeeded by what was probably the stormiest March within living memory. The heavens did not contain any sort of evil that was not then discharged. It was a month of terrific rainstorms, equally terrific winds, hard frosts, that still were intermittent, and did not last long enough to do the land good, with snowstorms which in many parts of the country laid the fields under several inches of snow, only to dissolve into moisture at the first stoppage of the fall. In weather such as this it was hopeless to expect that sheep would do well, and on many farms the results were simply lamentable. One farmer had to record that not only had his weakly lambs died almost immediately after birth, but that a large percentage of ewes had perished also. In one small, but exceptionally good, flock in Sussex no fewer than forty ewes died during March, the number of deaths for the corresponding weeks of last year being only two. In the country round Boston in Lincolnshire, it is reported that in flocks of from 50 to 100 ewes it is not at all uncommon for twenty lambs to have been lost during March, and from six to ten ewes. On the other hand, from a well-known breeder near Louth in the same county, we hear that in spite of the trying weather the lambs are very strong and healthy, the ewes have



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GENTLEMEN OF COLOUR.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

plenty of milk, and out of 304 ewes sent to the ram forty-five have had pairs and the rest singles. The number of losses has been extremely small, amounting only to five ewes and about half-a-dozen lambs. Another well-known breeder in the same county describes the season as an extraordinarily healthy one.

Out of 400 ewes sixty have had twins, the rest being singles. He has not lost a single ewe, and only a very few lambs. But these reports are exceptionally good. The others tell us that the season has been a bad one for many. At least, such is our impression after going over a very large number from various parts of the country. But the actual facts will not be ascertained until the returns have been made up by Major Craigie and his assistants. It has to be noted that sheep, as a rule, fail more fre-



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HANDSOME IS AS HANDSOME DOES.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

quently on small holdings than on large farms. They are, as a matter of fact, not good stock for the small holder to keep, and the reason is fairly obvious. The small holder usually has very few servants, if any, and the consequence is that he has to divide his attention among a greater number of objects, including the sheep if he have the fortune to possess a little flock; it is not practicable for him to keep a shepherd to look after them, whereas on a large farm one man, and generally a very good one, is told off for that duty.

It might be worth while to consider, therefore, where there are many large holdings, how far a flock of sheep could be run on a co-operative basis. We assume that the landlord would let to his tenants a fair amount of grazing land, and that he would not make the mistake of breaking up this land into small meadows, but would graze the sheep at so much per head, while the community would join all together to pay the wages of the shepherd. A demand for something to replace the common of the old yeoman is arising at the present moment, and something of this sort might perhaps meet it satisfactorily. Later on in the year, when detailed enquiries have been made, it may, perhaps, be possible to publish



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WHAT IS THAT MAN DOING?

"COUNTRY LIFE."

some account of the more successful means of piloting a flock of ewes through the perils of an unfavourable year. The only flaw in the value of such information is that the treatment of sheep is bound to vary with the local circumstances, and despite all the books that ever will be written, the successful farmer will be the one who trusts to his own judgment. We have referred a good deal to the occurrence of twins, but this is by no means from any belief that a large proportion of twins is desirable in a flock. The contrary is the case where they are meant for exhibition. It is obvious that a dam who has to nurse two lambs will not feed them so well as if she had only one; and in a March such as that of 1906 a very large number of twins could easily be managed, because the percentage of deaths from one cause or another is uncommonly high, and on most farms of which we know anything, after dividing the twins among the ewes that have lost their offspring, it has been barely possible to have in the end one lamb to every ewe. How to



Copyright. ALL THE WORLD TO EACH OTHER. "C.L."



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DORSET HORN TWINS.

"C.L."

induce the production of twins has been a problem with shepherds since the days when Jacob was serving his term of years for Rachel. But experience has shown that the science of breeding is in principle the same as that which has been successfully applied to dairy cattle; that is to say, care must be taken to

select both rams and ewes which are themselves the offspring of prolific dams. In all animals fertility seems to run in families, and if pains are taken to breed only from those whose pedigree shows them to come from a breeding stock, the desired results will be attained, though, of course, this selection must be accompanied at the same time by intelligent feeding and general treatment. One of the greatest triumphs of the modern flock-master is the bringing to maturity of lambs like the Hampshire Down. These are dropped usually about the middle of January, and those who are skilled in bringing them forward are able to show that from the day of its birth to August 1st about three-quarters of a pound will, on an average, be added to its weight daily. That is to say, it will weigh about 144lb. when 192 days old. This astonishing result is due, in large measure, to the breed, wherein early maturity has been tried for by generations of flock-masters. But even with sheep in which the quality has become hereditary, untiring care must be exerted to obtain this result. To begin at the beginning, it is of the utmost importance that the dam be kept in such condition as to ensure a liberal supply of milk to her offspring. Professor Wrightson gives in his method of feeding 1lb. of cake per day per head, with hay, turnips, or swedes. This is continued for about ten weeks, until it is considered desirable to decrease the



A. H. Robinson.

OUT OF BOUNDS.

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allowance to the ewes in order to increase that given to the lambs. Moreover, it is necessary to keep them in a state of the utmost comfort. Ewes and lambs are housed at night in a well-littered and sheltered pen, while they have daily access to a fold of turnips, and receive their cake and hay regularly.

As soon as the lambs begin to nibble at the turnip-tops, and to select the finest portions of the hay, Professor Wrightson gives them a corner to themselves, where they can have a little finely-ground linseed cake, split peas, oats, and crushed malt. Very soon they begin to like this, and crowd around their troughs after their corn, passing afterwards through the lamb-creeps to obtain milk from their mothers. By this time they are consuming eight different sorts of food—hay, turnips, turnip or rape greens, linseed cake, oats, malt, and milk. When March arrives, a little further change is given by allowing them three or four hours on

young grass in the middle of the day. This treatment lasts until April, when they begin to obtain the spring and summer fodder crops sown the previous autumn. These begin with rye over which swedes or mangels have been heaped, and from this fold, says Mr. Wrightson, they go daily in many cases in water meadow, always returning to the rye fold in the afternoon. He describes a typical day among the sheep as follows: "Early in the morning the shepherd begins by giving them an allowance of cake; he then grinds some mangel into troughs, which they eat with great relish. They are next admitted to a fresh field of vetches, after which they are sent to a field of good rape or cabbage. After two hours or more, and in the heat of the afternoon, they are allowed to spread themselves over some old sainfoin or aftermath clover. A return to the vetch fold and another feed of corn prepare them for a well-earned repose, having increased their weight by a pound."

OFF THE ROAD.

IN these days of greatly increased road travelling, when we are rapidly propelled by one or another motive power into rustic and remote regions of which our fathers were almost without knowledge, men soon come to look upon our island as a smaller place even than it appears on a map of the hemisphere, and in a very short time many of them profess to have exhausted its attractions and to be obliged to cross the Channel in search of fresh fields to conquer with their fast-flying cars. But while so many soon fret against the circumscribed bounds of their own country, of which they claim to have seen all that is worth seeing, there is still a large number of foot-farers who take their pleasure leisurely, and who, while glad to follow in fancy in the wake of those who explore wider lands, are happily conscious that within the borders of their native land there is more than enough to give them delight as long as their lives will last. During the greater part of the year these contented souls, while they cheerfully submit to the daily routine of professional or business duties, have the pleasantest recollections of their past wanderings along high-road and bye-road, over mountain and moorland; and every summer, when the month of freedom comes, they strap on again the old knapsack and light-heartedly take to the open road once more, well knowing that it will bring them into the midst of scenes as new and strange to them as though they had crossed the sea to find them. Only to such as these, and to some of those who are content to dwell in rural places, is the full interest and abounding charm of the country-side revealed, and they have never any fear of a time coming when they will find its pleasures pall.

Some of them have grown old since they first took to the road, and of necessity their free and careless foot-faring must soon be at an end; but by a reasonable return to Nature every year they have ensured a hale old age, during which they will be able to look back upon their life with a pleasant consciousness that they have known and enjoyed some of the best things that life can give. When in a reminiscent mood they will remember the twilight rambles across the moorland just as the lights of the cottage windows were beginning to twinkle in the village in the vale; the well-earned rest in the ancient inn, where "crusted characters" discoursed in quaint vernacular on country things and repeated the oft-told tales; and the freshness of the dewy mornings when they took to the road again with the wide unknown before them. They will think, too, of the strange friends and acquaintances they made in the days of their wayfaring; of the chance encounters with other roaming folk, whose converse and recalled experiences helped to while away the hours. For it is to the foot-farer that these things are chiefly granted—these and the knowledge of the beauty of the humblest flower of the heath and the ways of the shyest bird of the wood.

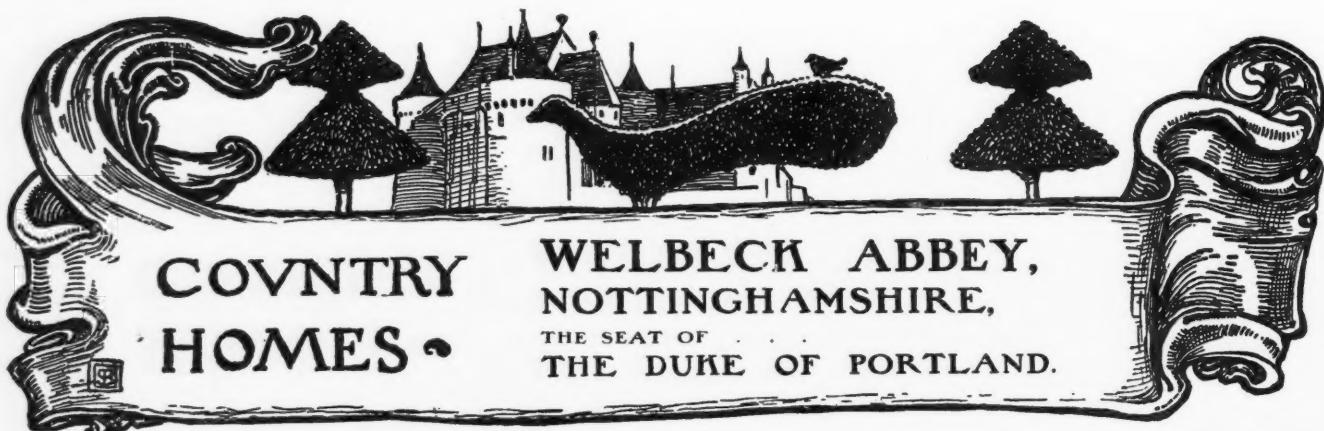
Thirty, forty, and even fifty years of summer rambling some of them can look back upon, and among the changes they have noted in English wayfaring life are some that are for the better and some that are for the worse. Among the latter, in the opinion of the true lover of the open road, will be included the gradual disappearance of most of the quaint characters who regularly or intermittently took to the road in order to gain a livelihood by means no longer practicable to itinerant folk. Gradually and almost imperceptibly these men of the road have vanished from their accustomed rounds, and with them some of the romance of the road has gone; one by one they have departed from the scenes where their faces were once familiar, and they have returned no more. If you ask of one of the few survivors what has happened to this or that old wayfarer, you are told that he has gone "off the road," a commonplace reply which often has a more or less tragic significance. For these men of the road are generally homeless travellers, and when they are compelled by old age or changed conditions to go "off the road," there is usually only one refuge open to them in which to spend their declining years.

Where is it now that the travelling tinker is not missed by the older country-folk at whose farms and cottages he used to call regularly in the course of his quarterly or half-yearly round? Some of us whose grey hairs are still but few can well remember the time when there was hardly a village in this country at which the regular appearance of the tinker might not be relied upon, and no sooner was his hooded cart drawn up on the common, green, or some piece of "no man's land" than housewives began to hunt up defective kettles, pots, and pans which had been put aside for him to deal with. Sometimes he was a Romany, whose swarthy, dark-haired wife would tell the fortunes of the credulous rustics who "crossed her hand" with money rather than run the risk of being "overlooked" by her; but more often he was a man who did not "hold with" the Romanies, who, in their turn, looked upon him as a "mumper," with whom the true gipsy could have no dealings. But so long as he kept to his particular district they allowed him to go his own way while they went theirs; for to "live and let live" was the desire of the men of the road, Tinker Tom no more thinking of trespassing upon the territory of Tinker Joe than the Romany Lees would think of encroaching upon the field of the Romany Greys. But cheap tinware and increased facilities of intercourse between the country and the towns have driven the tinkers "off the road," and the highways and bye-ways of the country-side will know them no more.

With the tinkers have disappeared most of the "Punch and Judy" men who twenty or more years ago made as regular rounds as the tinmen. At rare intervals the traveller meets with a showman of the old type, trudging along, bearing on his shoulders the once-familiar stage of his puppet-players; and beside him plods his assistant with the puppet-box slung on his back, a forlorn-looking Toby creeping listlessly along in the rear; but the sight is now rather depressing than pleasant, for the peripatetic provider of harmless mirth usually has the air of one who realises that times have sadly changed, and that his occupation is nearly gone. Time was when no one thought it beneath him to pause a while and smile at the boisterous antics of the hero with the hump and big red nose; but even the rising generation of rustics seems to be out of sympathy with Mr. Punch, whose dolorous efforts to sing "Bluebell" betray a consciousness of the fact that he is considered "behind the times." Slowly but surely the last of the "Punch and Judy" men are going "off the road," and with them the travelling acrobat, the juggler with his iron ball and sword tricks, and the vendor of cardboard windmills.

Among the men who at a certain season of the year led for a while a roving life were the meal-bolters. One never sees them now, and they are fast becoming forgotten, for to-day there is no work for them to do. They took to the road after harvest-time, each carrying on his back a meal-bolting or meal-dressing machine, and they called at every cottage of the country-side to dress the meal which had been provided by the cottagers' gleanings. There were folk who used to say that there was a kind of "pocket" in the meal-bolter's machine, and that some of the meal that went into the machine failed to come out again—at any rate until the bolter had taken his departure; but this was probably the suggestion of some rustic wit as a comment on the shrinkage of the meal in consequence of dressing. To-day there is nothing left in the fields for the cottagers to glean, and as there are no gleanings there can be no meal-bolters; so they, too, have gone "off the road."

Such folk are missed for a while and then forgotten. In course of time the Romanies and the few other roving folk who still constitute a picturesque feature of the road life of our country will also be missed, and then they, too, will be forgotten. It remains to be seen whether the great revival of road travelling will make up for the loss of the picturesque rovers by bringing back some of the old romance of the road. W. A. DUTT.



IN the year 1654 John Evelyn of Wotton and his wife, travelling about England in handsome and leisurely fashion, came to Welbeck, "the house of the Marques of Newcastle, seated in a botome in a park and environ'd with woods, a noble yet melancholy seate." In some such words we might still describe Welbeck Abbey, still the seat of the descendants of the Evelyns' Marquess. Like Woburn, another abbatial house of another English duke, Welbeck lies low, a building site chosen by religious men who asked retirement and shelter; but if the low site by the water-side be

melancholy, let us remember that the park which rings it round, a vast deer park with eight miles of boundary, is the merry greenwood of Robin Hood's forest of Sherwood. Before the venerable Green Dale oak, which, propped on crutches, still puts forth from its hollow body a living bough, we cannot surrender Robin Hood to those grudging historians who would describe him as a folk-myth. Here are trees which in their youth saw him range the greenshaws with Marian and Little John, Scathelock and Much the Miller's son. Not far away is Newstead, where we may see his cave, and hard by is Fountain Dale, where he first countered with the curtail friar. That the Sherwood land is poor land for the ploughman is something for rejoicing; its wild poverty has saved to England a broad piece of one of those forests which once ran from sea to sea.

The house's name tells its history. This Welbeck was once an abbey of Premonstratensians, an offshoot from Newhouse, founded here in the twelfth century by Thomas, son of Richard of Cuckney, lord of the lands in Cuckney which his ancestor, Jocelyn the Fleming, had in the Conqueror's time. This Thomas gave of his Cuckney lands to Berengar, abbot of Welbeck, and to the canons of the house, by a charter executed soon after Henry II., aided by Thomas and others like unto him, had come to the throne. The register of the abbey proudly records that Thomas the founder was *vir bellicosus* — a man of war — during all the struggle with King Stephen, having built at Cuckney one of those castles which so moved to hatred the chroniclers of King Stephen's reign. A second founder and patron of this house was John Hotham, bishop of Ely, who acquired the whole manor of Cuckney in the fourteenth century and settled the same upon the abbey, adding eight canons to its stalls. After this Welbeck prospered, and was the chief house of the Premonstratensian order in England when Henry VIII. dissolved the abbeys. Welbeck shared the common lot, and its site was bought by one Richard Whalley. From the Whalleys it passed by purchase to Sir Charles Cavendish, who at the beginning of the reign of James I. began to pull down the old walls and change a house of religious into a seat for the dukes who were to come of his loins.

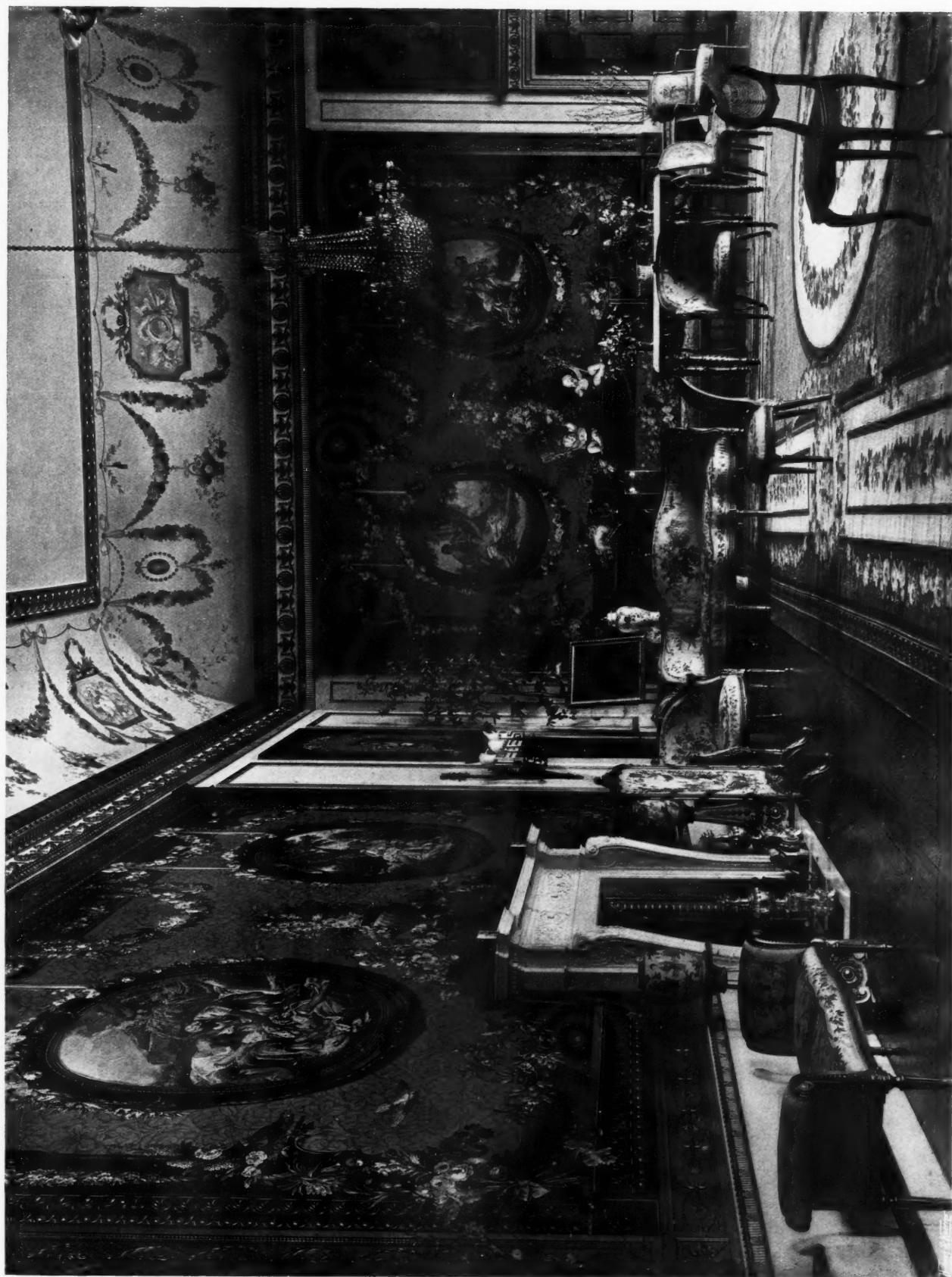
Sir Charles Cavendish was a younger son of Bess of Hardwick, the Derbyshire heiress,



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DINING-ROOM LOBBY.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



"COUNTRY LIFE."

THE RED WITHDRAWING ROOM: NORTH END

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whose ancestral home of Hardwick is less than ten miles from Welbeck, over the county border. By her second marriage, this famous lady, who was four times a wife and long outlived her fourth husband, had two sons who founded ducal houses, the Duke of Devonshire descending from an elder brother of Sir Charles. His mother's passion for building must have taken Sir Charles Cavendish, for in his time the ancient abbey and abbey church of Welbeck disappeared into his new work.

Legend has it that even now the tombs of the abbey church remain, that the effigies of the Cuckneys and their heirs and the sleeping abbots clad in stone still lie boxed in some forgotten place, behind walls or masking panels within this mass of buildings.

By his wife Catherine, the heir of the Northumberland Ogleys, Sir Charles begat William Cavendish, a successful courtier at a time when the Court offered a great career for a well-born young man of good presence. While still a lad, he was created Knight of the Bath, and in 1610 King James honoured Welbeck with one of his costly visits, the host being Viscount Mansfield before the next year's end. Eight years afterward he was Earl of Newcastle, and



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the Ogle estates falling to his hand, he was able in 1633 to spend between £4,000 and £5,000 in entertaining the new King at Welbeck. For this occasion Ben Jonson composed his masque, entitled "The King's Entertainment at Welbeck." In the following year the King (accompanied by Queen Henrietta Maria) was again entertained at Welbeck, Jonson writing another masque, called "Love's Welcome," which was performed at the Earl's other seat, Bolsover Castle.

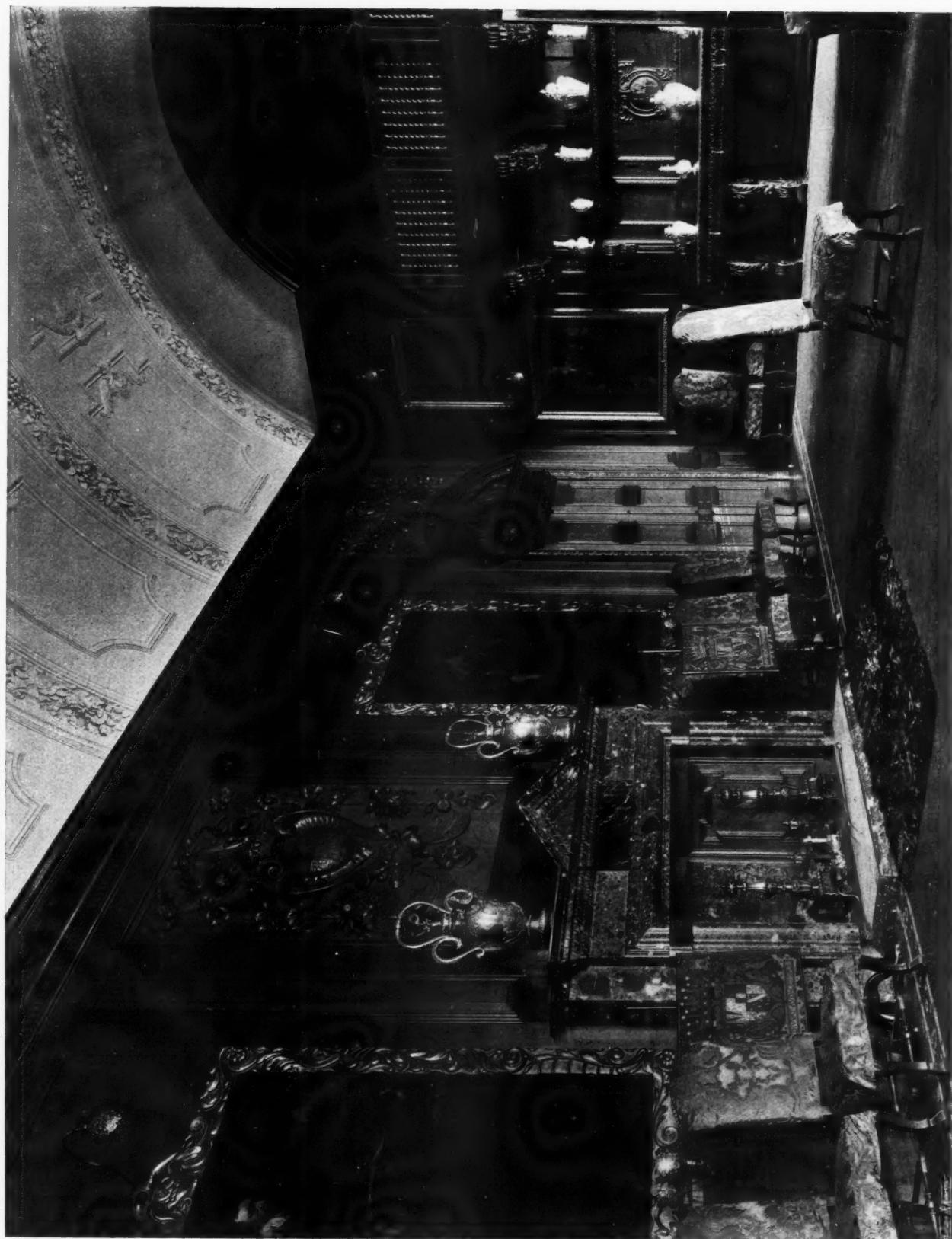
The cost of this visit was nearly £15,000. Newcastle was named governor to the young Prince of Wales, and places and pensions were coming to his hands when the wars began, and all his gains were in peril. He commanded in the North, and at his own charges raised troops which he led into Yorkshire. By the fight at Adwalton he won Yorkshire for the King, and in 1643 he had the barren honour of changing his earldom for a marquessate. After Marston Moor, where he fought as a simple volunteer, having vainly urged Rupert to wait for reinforcements, he washed his hands of civil war and went oversea to Hamburg, where began sixteen years of wandering exile. In exile he met and married his second wife, Margaret Lucas, sister of the



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THE SWAN WITHDRAWING-ROOM.

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PART OF THE DINING-ROOM.

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"COUNTRY LIFE."

Sir Charles Lucas who died for his defence of Colchester, her jewels being pawned for their household need. In exile, too, he wrote his famous book on the *ménage*, he being the great horse-master of his day. At the Restoration they came home again to find themselves an old and fantastic couple in a Court which knocked behind their backs. He had spent, by his own showing, a million in the royal cause, and his estates were never wholly restored. As Duke and Duchess of Newcastle, the husband and wife withdrew to their old home at Welbeck, where they might solace themselves with the interminable plays, verses, and essays which set them among Walpole's "noble authors." The second Duke, who died at Welbeck in 1691, saw his son, the Lord Ogle, die in his own lifetime, and was succeeded by his five daughters and co-heirs, of whom Margaret, the third daughter, godchild of Duchess Margaret, was wife to John Holles, Earl of Clare, in whom the ducal title of Newcastle was revived. Their only daughter became the wife of Edward Harley, second Earl of Oxford, and friend of Pope and Swift. The Earl's only surviving child was Lady Margaret Cavendish Harley, through whose marriage with the second Duke of Portland the Welbeck estates have descended to the Bentincks.

The Keppels and the Bentincks mark for our peer-

age the age in which William of Orange came over to preserve the liberties of a nation which gave him but grudging gratitude. Two Dutch adventurers, as discontented English politicians would miscall them, were William's most trusted friends. Of Arnold Joost van Keppel, a lad born of a great house of the Guelderland nobility, and William Bentinck, a younger son of a gentle family at Overijssel, King William made two English earls and Knights of the Garter. The Keppels, although their ancestor went home to Holland after the King's death, have since been English of the English, and their house, founded by a soldier who was at Ramillies and Oudenarde, has bred us many famous fighting men, and still holds the earldom of Albemarle. But the Bentincks have climbed higher: their marriages have set them amongst the great governing families of the country.

Our first Bentinck might thank his handsome face for his first advancement. He became page to the Prince of Orange, and gentleman of his bedchamber, "the best servant I have known in princes' or private families," wrote Sir William Temple, to whom Bentinck's master told the tale of how when at death's door with small-pox "in sixteen days and nights he never called once that he was not answered by Monsieur Bentinck as if he had been awake." Bentinck had no quality of a great



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THE GREAT BALLROOM

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statesman, but he was loyal and steadfast. Our envious countrymen saw a Dutchman's boorishness in his carriage, but the courtiers of the Grand Monarque, no mean judges of a gallant gentleman, had nothing but admiration for the ambassador whose splendid equipage recalled the cloth of gold embassy of Buckingham. As a soldier he showed a Dutchman's stolid courage, riding beside his King at the Boyne Water with the Dutch horse guards, and at Landen, where one ball cut a curl off the King's periuke, another pierced his broad sleeve, and a third grazed his side. His rewards were rich and many, a grant of the royal house and demesnes of Theobalds being made to him after the jealous Commons had protested against a vast endowment of Welsh lands. For his first wife he had Anne Villiers, a

Administration in the days of the French Revolution; and the sixth duke, now lord of Welbeck, is his great-grandson, having succeeded in 1879 on the death of his cousin, through whose surviving sister the great London estates of the Bentincks have passed to Lord Howard de Walden.

The house of Welbeck Abbey has been a-making in various styles since its Cavendish owner began his work upon it in the reign of James I., building in some part of the old structure of the abbots of Welbeck. It is a sombre pile, massive and ugly in many styles. The west front has battled parapets, and a great square tower from which the Duke may display his banner, while the east front, rising from a broad terrace over the lawns towards the lake, has a gabled roof. The south front has for its ideal the Italian villa with balustered parapets into which so many great English homes have changed themselves. Many additions were made by the late Duke, the most curious being the subterranean tunnels which run in all directions, and the large rooms constructed underground. Through one tunnel is reached a riding school, 385ft. long and 112ft. wide. The great ballroom, unfinished at the death of the fifth Duke, is seen in one of our pictures, with its wonderful floor of polished oak and its walls, now hung with several scores of old paintings.

The stables are amongst the most remarkable in the kingdom, as befits the house of one who has been twice Master of the Horse, the descendant of that mirror of horse-masters, the Duke of Newcastle, and here a hundred horses may have their stalls. The present Duke's winnings upon the Turf are not far away, in the shape of a row of almshouses.

But the contents of Welbeck are more remarkable than the house. The pictures, and above all the portraits by old English and foreign masters, are as notable for their number as their quality. Here is a famous Queen Elizabeth of Mark Gheeraerts, and here, in the dining-room, is that wonderful Van Dyck, the boy Charles, Prince of Wales, which was last seen in London amongst the royal portraits at the New Gallery. A brown and round-faced boy, with straight hair falling upon his forehead, Charles is painted in half armour, the tasses meeting riding boots of soft leather. On a mass of stone at his left hand rests his helmet with red and white plumes, and the beautiful hands of the boy play with the wheel-lock of a pistol. The boyhood of the elder Charles is recorded here also by the sad face over a ruff of a child in long skirts.

of green velvet, a child carrying a little dag or gun, his greyhound running beside him. Here is the first of the Portlands, a somewhat hard-faced Kneller, a contrast with the triumphant male beauty of the portrait which Hyacinthe Rigaud painted of the popular peace envoy. Our picture shows the Reynolds portrait of the third Duke, a Georgian statesman, seated before his papers, in velvet coat, white stockings, and little wig, his lace-ruffled hand at his chin.

The many lines of heirs which have met in the house of Portland explain this gathering of Holbein, Janssen, and Mytens, Van Dyck, Lely and Kneller, Dahl and Richardson, Reynolds and Gainsborough, West and Lawrence. Portraits of Noels and Wriothesleys came in by the first Duke's marriage. Harleys, Cavendishes, and Holleses are here



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THE GOTHIC HALL.

cousin of another ducal family founded by a handsome page, and, like her husband, one of the household of Orange, being a maid of honour to the Princess Mary. At the rise of Keppel as Court favourite the Earl of Portland, "cold and dry . . . who seemed to have the art of creating many enemies to himself and not one friend," withdrew himself from the Court, but when William lay gasping in asthma upon his death-bed it was for his old servant Portland that he asked with his last spoken word, and he died with Portland at his bedside. In the next generation the earldom of Portland became a dukedom for Henry Bentinck, who died Captain-General and Governor of Jamaica, and the Welbeck estates came in by the marriage of the second Duke with the Lady Margaret Cavendish Harley. The third Duke was Prime Minister in 1783 and 1807, joining Pitt's

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SOUTH WALL OF THE RED WITHDRAWING-ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

through the second Duke's match. Beside these are Talbots and Veres, Pierreponts and Villierses, the last including a portrait of George Villiers, the favourite, painted when a beardless lad. In our picture of the dining-room Van Dyck's picture of Strafford in his armour, booted and spurred, lowering brows and keen face over a plain white collar, is flanked on the other side of the mantel-piece by another Van Dyck, the portrait of the Duke of Newcastle, all cavalier, from the love-lock on his left shoulder to his rosetted shoes. Beside the fireplace below are seen two old screens of needlework of the arms of John Holles, second Earl of Clare. The tall picture by Mytens of a lady in black, with dark hair brushed back from her forehead, a platter-shaped ruff, and long cambric cuffs, is that of the Duke of Newcastle's first wife, Elizabeth Bassett of Blore.

The Gothic hall in which this picture hangs is a curious example of the eighteenth century taste for toyshop Gothic, the fan tracery of the ceiling being stucco upon basket-work. The rococo Chinese mantel-piece of the Swan withdrawing-room is sufficiently curious, with its shining sun, its clambering Chinamen and its pagoda and tendrils. Rose-coloured tapestries, woven in 1783, and the medallions and

China Roses, if the varieties are of moderate growth, such as Aurore, Cora, Cramoisie Supérieure, Fabvier, Little Pet, and Mme. H. Montefiore, require very little pruning, and the shoots should be left about 7in. or 8in. long. Those of medium growth cut back to within 4in. or 5in. of the base; the varieties Alice Hamilton, Arethusa, Cardinal, the ordinary China Rose, Comtesse de Caryla, Mme. Eugene Resal, Mme. L. Messimy, Queen Mab, and Red Pet should be treated in this way. More vigorous than these are Ducher, Irene Watts, Jean Bach Sisley, Mrs. Bosanquet, Petrus Donsel, Unermudliche, and these may be cut to within 4in. of the base. The Bourbon Roses are not grown so much as formerly, but it is a pity to allow the Teas and Hybrid Teas, beautiful as they are, to overshadow the old Roses which perfumed the gardens of our forbears; the Bourbons have a very strong pure Rose fragrance, Queen, Queen of Bedders, and Souvenir de la Malmaison. When the varieties are very strong in growth, the old wood should be removed for the most part, and the young growths retained at a length of 3in. or 4in. Acidalie, Climbing Malmaison, Mme. Isaac Periere, Mrs. Paul, Robusta, and Zephirin Dromkin form this set. The Polyantha or Fairy Roses of moderate growth require to be pruned to 4in. from the ground when they are in beds or used as edgings, but if grown merely as bushes, thin out the centres of the plants and top the growths. The varieties to be treated in this way are Anna Marie de Montravel, Etoile d'Or, Gloire des Polyantha, Mignonette, Paquerette, Perle des Rouges, and Rosalinde. Prune the stronger sorts, which include Aschenbrodel, Clothilde Soupert, Eugenie Lamesch, Georges Pernet, Mme. E. A. Nolte, Mme. Le Vavasseur, Perle d'Or,



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ON THE WEST WALL; RED WITHDRAWING-ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

garlands of the walls remind us, in the red drawing-room, that the eighteenth century, surrendering to the fashions of Versailles and the Trianon, was more true to itself than when it wandered after Gothic and Chinese fantasies.

IN THE GARDEN.

PRUNING ROSES OTHER THAN TEA AND HYBRID PERPETUALS.

We include in this category the Hybrid Tea, too, as the way the plants should be pruned has been described already, but amateurs are frequently puzzled to know how to prune the Noisette, China, and a few of the less familiar types. The very vigorous Noisette Roses should not be pruned until July or August, the best time being immediately after the flowering is over, when old and weakly wood must be cut away to give the strong shoots space to develop. By the strong-growing Noisette Roses we mean Feilenberg, Aimée Vibert, Joseph Bernachi, Longworth Rambler, L'Ideal, William Allen Richardson, Ophirie, and Mme. Pierre Cochet. For those still more vigorous in growth the treatment may be much the same. Leave the laterals 2ft. to 3ft. long, and spread out the shoots well. Celine Forester, Lamarque, Rêve d'Or, and Solfaterre are the best known of these. The monthly or

and Petit Constant, to 4in. or 6in. of the base where planted as bedders, and thin out the centres. Bushes require very little pruning.

PRUNING THE JAPANESE AND MOSS ROSES.

The reason the Japanese Rose is frequently nothing but a straggling unruly bush is through improper or, generally, no pruning at all. When large ruddy-coloured hips are desired, the pruning should be severe, no less than cutting down the shoots hard each year; but bushes or hedges of Japanese Roses require different treatment. The old wood should be thinned out, and the growths that remain left at a length of about 3ft. The most famous of this class now is called Conrad F. Meyer; it requires little pruning. Bend over the straight thorny shoots, or leave them at a length of 6ft., but no further treatment is necessary. This makes a great bush, and is one of the most vigorous Roses in the garden. It is the first to open its huge buds, which expand into blooms of immense size, and filled with scent. It is a remarkable Rose in many ways. The Moss and Provence Roses are much neglected by the present-day gardener. Of the Moss, De Meaux, Spong, and White de Meaux require pruning from 6in. to 9in. from the base, the crowded growths removed, and the laterals cut back to 3in. from the base. More vigorous sorts, such as the Common Moss Rose of the garden, the old Cabbage, Crested Moss, De Meaux, Gloire des Mosseuses, James Veitch, Lanei, Little Gem, Mme. E. Ory, Mme. Wm. Paul, and White Bath, should be left about 1ft. long, cutting back the laterals to about 2in. long. Some of the older wood is better removed. It is rarely one sees the Common Moss Rose



A YEW AVENUE.

nowadays, but one of the delights of boyhood days was to wear the pretty mossy flower, its rosy petals peeping from their veil of green.

HONESTY AND WALLFLOWERS AND STOCKS.

The Honesty (*Lunaria biennis*) we remember in childhood days, when the silvery flakes attracted baby hands. It is less seen in the modern garden, but no hardy plant has greater use in winter decorations. Purple is the colour of the type, but the white variety is quite a pretty garden flower, sufficiently so to sow in a large group. May is the month to sow, and the seedlings should be treated as suggested in the case of the other biennials. Where the scales are desired for winter decoration take the pods between forefinger and thumb, and by gently rubbing them the outer scales will fall off, leaving the bright silver colouring which is so much in request. It is needless to refer to the Wallflower, as a note appeared recently on this queen of garden flowers, in which the best varieties for colour were pointed out. Sow Brompton Stocks in May in the open ground, and plant out where the seedlings are to flower a few weeks later. We enjoy the Stock most as a summer bedding plant, and one variety to a bed. A mass of a white variety is pleasant to look at and agreeable to smell, and another virtue is the long season the plants remain in bloom.

RANDOM NOTES.

Narcissus stellata.—This is our favourite early Narcissus or Daffodil. It belongs to the star group, and opens its soft yellow flowers abundantly long before others of its race have scarce shown a bud. The stem is long and slender, which is an advantage when the flowers are desired for cutting, and the bulbs increase in strength with age. It is now very reasonable in price, and should be planted in quantity in the border or in the grass. Under both conditions it is a complete success.

A Grub in Phlox Shoots.—We were very troubled last year with a grub which eats down the stem of the young shoots of herbaceous Phlox, and we advise those with beds of this great summer flower to examine the plants at frequent intervals. This pest works much mischief in a short time, and entirely destroys the appearance of a Phlox bed when it is springing afresh into life. We

are not aware of the name of this pest, but it is easily discovered. Its whereabouts can be detected by the curled-up leaves on the shoots, and its generally unhappy aspect.

THE CUSTOM OF SWALING

SWALING is, as far as we know, a custom confined to Dartmoor, and what it means our pictures will go a long way to explain. They show the manner in which the bracken and furze are burnt on Dartmoor, just as heather is set fire to on hill grazings in Scotland and on grouse moors. The object, however, is somewhat different. After the



heather is burnt one of the effects produced is that it grows again green and tender, not with the tough stalks developed in mature age. The object in burning the bracken is to get rid of it altogether. Furze is a very beautiful covering for a stretch of moor or hillside, but it cannot in any proper use of language be called a valuable crop. In some parts of the country, when dried, it is used for thatching, rough fencing, and similar purposes, but as for any other purpose, it is not of any great account, and where it flourishes exceedingly, it is needless to say that grass will not grow. Great areas of it, however, which look so green and alluring towards the end of summer, serve little useful purpose. Rabbits use it as cover, and even the tawny skin of the fox may show by glimpses as Reynard prowls about among the stems of which his one cover is often composed. But during all the long summer days, the whins, as they are called in Scotland, grow as though the place had no purpose in life except to develop its own beauty and produce a miniature forest on the bare places of the hill. When burnt in spring, however, the grass takes full advantage of the space given it by the destruction of a self-assertive adversary, and what in one year was a desert of thorns becomes in the next a valuable pasture. For shepherds and graziers will



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CLOUDING THE COOMBE WITH SMOKE. "COUNTRY LIFE."

have it that the herbage grown after burnt gorse is most nutritive and appetising, so that cattle like it and thrive on it. As to the method of burning there is no need to say much. It is not a task that costs the farmer anything, since it is one that not only his boys are able to perform, but that they delight in. The children sally forth armed with boxes of matches in their pockets, and with a conscience rendered quiet and secure by the fact that they may at one and the same time be apparently working mischief and yet doing good. Probably the boy never lived who did not rejoice in a fire, and when he can go into the fields and set blaze to the dry and withering bushes his joy is complete. The young Devonian takes exactly the same pleasure in this conflagration as the youthful Scot does in the annual burning of the heather, and he produces a spectacle quite as impressive and picturesque. Indeed, it is something more than impressive when night has flung its dark mantle over the billowing hills, the coombes, and the valleys. The blaze, occurring as it generally does in the bare and exposed portions of Dartmoor Forest, to adopt the local name, is seen far and near, and at a distance produces an impression not unlike that which follows from a close approach to



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DANGEROUS IF NOT UNDER CONTROL.

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the Black Country, where at midnight flames leaping from a hundred mouths seem to be mounting to the very sky itself. It is true, nevertheless, that the fire has not the symbolical meaning which it possessed in a country where of old her warriors were called together by sending round a fiery cross, and where the expression "the heather is on fire" was a well-understood synonym for general rebellion. On Dartmoor the people have as much character and individuality as those in the



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AN ISOLATED CLUMP.

North, but their traditions are homelier and gentler. They have not endured so long in little hostile tribes, and they refrain from nourishing the keen animosities engendered by the strife of the clans. The difference between the two districts might very well be likened to that between the heather native to the Scottish hills and the bracken whose destruction by fire lights up the fertile Devonian valleys. In spite of external differences, the human boy remains pretty much the same in the East and in the West, in the North and in the South. The glee with which those young Devonians set about burning the bracken is identical with that which the same task would inspire in any of the young manhood of Great Britain. And when the dry bracken catches fire from the gorse his joy is not bounded by agricultural consideration. It is little he recks how far the blaze may spread.

ANGLING IN AMERICA.

DR. STARR JORDAN, author of the latest compendious work on fishes, though apparently no angler himself, has wisely not allowed that limitation to deter him from judiciously quoting those of his countrymen bitten with the divine infection. A consideration of a few of the many angling passages cited in his latest volumes should enable the reader on this side of the Atlantic to appreciate at once the American angler's ethics, and the significance of the notice posted on a Continental store to the effect that the proprietor spoke English and understood American. Every sport has its own technology, and in none, perhaps, do the two great branches of the Anglo-Saxon race express themselves more divergently than in that of angling. The following passage, in praise of the Florida crab-eater, or sergeant-fish, will, I think, sufficiently illustrate this point: "The fierce fellow took the top of the water and went along lashing it with his tail, swift as a bullet, then descended, and, with a short, sharp electric shock, left the line to come home

free." Such an excerpt might well be set for paraphrase into King's English in an examination paper. Twice do we encounter the strange word "logy"—once in allusion to the trout of the warm Yellowstone Springs, and again in reference to those of the Klamath Lakes. Now this word, by analogy with the word log, presumably means lethargic—offering dead weight rather than fight. Yet no English angling author would ever employ it. If he did, he would, in all probability, spell it "loggy."

Coming from syntax to ethics, we find the American sportsman more severe (on paper) than his brethren in older and more populous countries, where trout are scarcer than they were in the days when Cotton donned his master's mantle and mused beside the streams of Staffordshire. Whether the citizen of the United States will ever condescend to the humble pleasures of bait-fishing, when even in his own land trout-fishing is scarce and costly, it is left for a future generation to determine. Up to the present, he is an irreconcilable. One authority quoted by Dr. Jordan pitied poor Izaak Walton for having existed in times when the only ideal of fishing embraced "a can of worms and a crude hook," and declares that "there is no real sport in any kind of fishing except fly-fishing." This, it is true, excludes his countryman, the tarpon, from some poor pretension to give sport, but that does not occur to him. Yet, even in the United States, there are signs of a falling away from grace. The carp family, it is true, has hitherto been made of no account by Americans, for whom "coarse fishing" has no attractions. Dr. Jordan tells us that they are regarded as "boys' fish" by anyone capable of catching a trout or black bass; but Dr. Goode, a high authority, prophesies that the perch will gain in favour among his countrymen, "who

have neither time nor patience for long trips or complicated tackle." The author him self takes the "pot-fisher" and "trout-hog," two separate individualities, whom he is at some pains to define, to task, and he pleads that "ethically it is better to lie about your great catches of fine fish than to make them. For most anglers, also," he whimsically adds, "it is more easy!"

As a rule, Dr. Jordan deals with angling by the proxy of quotation, but here and there he offers disingenuous little definitions of angling, which betray that he is in no close



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SCARRING THE SIDE OF THE HILL

"COUNTRY LIFE."

sympathy with the sport. In one passage of the kind he informs us that it may be done with a hook baited with an earthworm, grasshopper, or similar bait, but that modern sportsmen prefer the fly as more workmanlike and effective. Of the splendid tarpon he merely tells us that it "takes the hook with great spirit, and as it reaches a length of 6ft. or more, it affords much excitement to the successful angler." This brief passage is singularly like the equally concise account of tarpon-

fishing given in twenty words by Mr. Boulenger in his admirable contribution to the Cambridge Natural History, which was reviewed not long ago in these pages. Perhaps the best hit of all is made at the greedy sportsman by Dr. Linton in the course of a very interesting account of trout disease in the Yellowstone Lake. The writer refers to the pelican as the only enemy the trout had to fear before the advent of "tourists, ambitious to catch big strings of trout and photograph them with a Kodak."

That an encyclopædic work of this nature should abound in facts of interest to the practical and scientific angler is only what one would expect. The salmon-fisherman will find much to engage his attention in the arguments with which Dr. Jordan substantiates his dissent from the "parent river" theory. Fishermen of every class cannot disregard the importance of the anatomical allusions to the convex lens in the eyes of their

victims, which renders the latter so short-sighted as to take alarm whenever any strange object is clumsily obtruded within their vision. The fact that the pike's brain weighs less than a thirteen-hundredth part of its body is also encouraging; and other meat for the angler's appetite is provided in Dr. Van Dyke's praise of the ouananiche, the lamented extinction of the genuine wild brook trout, the deprecatory account of the coarse appetites of the great lake trout, and the manner in which South Sea Islanders use a decoy to catch a pugnacious little relative of the beryx. And for the sportsman's better protection against the unsympathetic arraignment preferred by humanitarian friends, Dr. Jordan has a gem of an anecdote about a trout seizing a hook baited with one of its own eyes, an authenticated episode that surely reduces the alleged keen sensibility of pain in fishes to its lowest terms.

F. G. AFLALO.

KINGFISHERS AT HOME.

WIthin a hundred yards of my cottage flows the mill-stream. Downwards, it passes through the village street, pausing at the mill on its way; upwards, it loiters through the meadows, dividing them from that heathery stretch which is only farmed by Nature, and which forms the eastward portion of Thomas Hardy's "Edgon." It is in following its upward windings that the Nature-lover finds his happiest hunting-ground, for there one quickly loses sight and consciousness of human striving, the door of artificiality is closed behind us, and Nature reigns supreme, unchallenged. On a day in May when the meadows shone golden with buttercups, purple with orchids, and, like Joseph's coat, many coloured in patches, I made an early start to search for the nest of a kingfisher. The bird's frequent presence had attracted my attention on a previous day, and I felt convinced its nest must be at no very great distance from a little foot-bridge that spanned the stream half a mile above the mill. Everything combined to tempt one to loiter, for every yard of ground is crowded with interest in May—birds, insects, flowers. Arriving near the foot-bridge I concealed myself under a drooping willow and waited. I had an uninterrupted view of the stream for 300yds. or 400yds., and I had not been in my cover many minutes before I espied the bird coming straight as an arrow, and flying just above the water. There was no perceptible slowing in her speed until she stopped with a jerk on the hand-rail, fixed to guide the timid in crossing. For a few minutes she sat motionless, her head slightly tilted on one side, when she suddenly dropped like a stone into the water, returning to her perch with a writhing fish in her beak. After manoeuvring it until she had a firm grip near the tail, she swung it two or three times against the side of the rail



THE YOUNG ARE CLOTHED IN SPINES.

to kill it, and flew off in the direction from which she had come, passing out of sight round a bend in the stream. Twelve minutes passed, and she was back once more, to pursue the same tactics over again. On the hand-rail was much evidence of her skill as a fisher, many patches of shining silvery scales showing where fish after fish had met a speedy end. Keeping a sharp look-out ahead, I continued up the stream until I reached a small covert that slanted down to the water's edge; here I stood motionless under a tree and waited. Soon she came in sight, but must have seen me, for she left the line of the stream and curved off across the meadows at a right angle, and, although I waited for an hour, I saw her no more. So I continued my way, searching the opposite bank diligently for signs of a likely hole. There were plenty of holes, certainly, but they all bore evidence of the work of water-voles, and the kingfisher knows better than to attempt to rear her brood in a hole already bored, preferring, with the help of her mate, to excavate one on lines to suit her own idea of what is necessary. Thus for a mile, but sign neither of bird nor nest. Then I crossed the stream, and scanned the other bank. I had almost reached the little covert afore-mentioned, and

was almost on the point of despairing of my quest, when, rounding a sharp bend, I saw her hovering close to the bank, with a fish in her beak. She saw me, however, and was gone out of sight in an instant. But her disappearance was too late; she had, by that momentary hovering halt, "given it away."

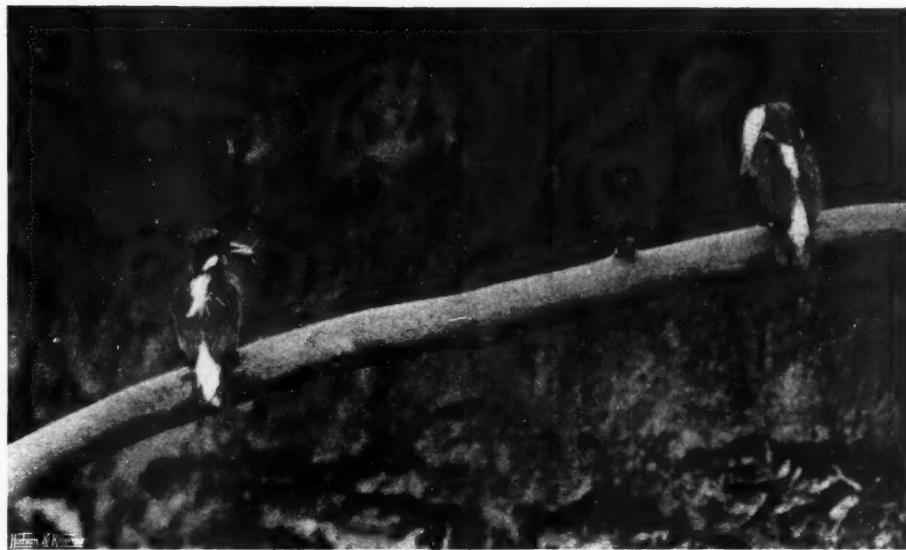
A few yards further, at a point where the bank descended sheer to the water, was a hole quite different from those of the water-vole. This one was by itself, not another hole showing within some yards. The edge was not bevelled off, nor smoothed, nor graduated; whilst up the tunnel lay a streak of whitish substance as far as the eye could follow. Final confirmation was given by a sound issuing from it—a regular, low monotone, something between the insistent croak of a landrail, the rattle of a nightjar, and the chirping of a hundred grasshoppers, yet more liquid than either, and perhaps better symbolised by a grass-cutter at work in a distant hayfield. This chanting melody proved



A YOUNG ONE AT MOUTH OF HOLE.

two things—firstly, that the nest contained young; secondly, that they were still in the quill stage, for, when once feathered, they become wary of the slightest outside sound, and the music ceases abruptly at the approach of any "animal" that treads heavier than a shrew-mouse. An old Scotch fir stood close at hand, and, climbing up to a comfortable seat on an out-stretched bough, whence I had a clear view of the hole, I sat down to watch. Soon she darted round the bend and passed the nest as though it was no concern of hers, alighting on a branch some 30yds. away. There she sat for a few minutes, leaving her perch to dart past the hole once more, and rest on a bough a short distance lower down. Several times this was repeated, until, presumably, she was convinced that no enemy lurked in sight, when she alighted on a root right opposite the hole, paused a moment or two, and then flew straight in. Five seconds more, and she came out in the same hurried manner, dropping straight into the water, and then flying to the root opposite the hole, from which point she took three successive dives before flying away in the direction of the bridge where I had first seen her. It is in no way surprising that she should desire a bath after entering the nest, for all who are familiar with the nesting habits of kingfishers know that it is a most unsavoury spot! There is usually a larder, well stocked with fish—unpleasant neighbours, indeed, after a few days' hanging. Then, too, kingfishers are less particular than most other birds in regard to "tidying the nursery," the result being exactly what one would expect: a number of flies are generally found buzzing round the entrance, and plenty of their larvae may be found within.

I spent many hours on several days watching the nest, and in time the hen bird became almost callous of my close presence, and would enter the hole with a fish when I was standing within a few feet of it. I soon noticed that, whereas the hen spent the livelong day fishing, and depositing her catch within reach of the young, the cock only put in a very occasional appearance, coming but once or twice in the course of a day. This is a habit followed by many other birds as long as the young are only a few days old and do not require a large amount of food; but when they grow and their voracity increases, it is usual for the cock to take his share in the toil of supplying food, and sometimes to do considerably more than half the work of foraging. It would appear that the growth of the young depended to a very large extent on the amount of sunshine—a not very lucid remark, seeing that they are buried some distance underground. But the reason is that, when the sun is shiring and insects are hatching out in their myriads, the fish seek the shallows and the water is more transparent, and hence the birds have a greater chance to see and capture them. Thus, in sunny weather the bird would bring a fish every few minutes, whereas when the day was overcast an hour or more would often elapse between her visits. The hole faced south, but was more or less in constant shadow from the overhanging branches of trees; it sloped slightly upwards—for better drainage, no doubt—and tunnelled perfectly straight into the bank for a distance of $2\frac{1}{2}$ in., being rather more than 2ft. above high-water mark. As there was no resting-place or convenient bough for her to perch on nearer than the root on the opposite side of the stream, and this always in the shadow of the bank, I placed a branch in the stream near the hole, convenient for her as a resting-place, and equally convenient for me as a spot whereon to focus the lens. The first time she returned after the stick was placed in position she alighted on it without fear or apparent wonder at its being there; and since she subsequently used it regularly, I am inclined to suppose she found it an improvement on her root and appreciated it accordingly. Her call to the young—only uttered occasionally—consisted of a note high up in the musical scale, and approximating to "Te-ee, te-ee," but its effect on the young was not perceptible, since they neither



BOTH BIRDS ON THE STICK (COCK ON LEFT.)

paused in their continuous bubbling song nor appeared to accentuate it.

It is one of the anomalies of Nature that such a particularly brilliant bird, and one that always appears so well groomed, should keep its nest in such a filthy condition; though the fact that she almost invariably bathed after issuing from the hole inclines one to suppose that, after all, it may be more her misfortune than her fault, and that she has perhaps not yet learned the way to keep it tidy. Other birds are absolutely fastidious in this respect, and consistently remove all excrement to a considerable distance from the nest. It must be admitted in extenuation of her somewhat slack habits that the evacuations of the young are particularly aqueous. Very often she backed out of the hole, finding it probably a difficult matter to turn round in the comparatively narrow tunnel, and her long beak naturally requiring space. At the end where the nest was placed, the cavity was larger, and turning round would be an easy matter; but six lusty birds occupy a deal of room.

It would require an elastic imagination to speak of the nest as having been built, for when I carefully dug it out after the young had flown there was nothing structural about it; just a mass of scales and fish bones about $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. thick, the latter so sharp in their minute fragments that to gather a handful was like picking up a dead thistle, and required the same amount of vexatious trouble to get rid of. It does not read like a particularly comfortable surface on which to spend even a month of one's life, yet the youngsters did not appear to suffer inconvenience. There are, I know, many nests of the kingfisher which may deserve the title, bones being woven and cemented together until a veritable nest is the result; but from my own observation I am inclined to think such elaboration is the exception rather than the rule. Reference to the nest reminds one of the assertion of our ancient naturalists, who averred that the halcyon built its nest on land and subsequently floated it in the sea, the gods



SHE ALIGHTED ON THE STICK WITHOUT FEAR.

allowing it fourteen days in which to incubate and rear its young, and during which space of time they undertook to maintain the sea in a state of absolute calm. Hence our familiar saying, "halcyon days." Pliny tells us, further, that the discarded nest was deemed a valuable medicine, and was eagerly sought after. Seeing that the young kingfishers are considerably longer in reaching maturity than most birds, one fears the fourteen days conceded by the gods was but a pitifully short allowance!

Kingfishers share with other members of the same species a peculiarity in regard to the feathering of the young. The feathers appear in due course, but are contained in a sheath for a long period, these sheaths bursting suddenly, and all at one time; so that one day the young are clothed in spines, like a hedgehog, and the next are in full feather, in colours almost identical with those of the old birds. On Monday, say, they are the quaintest-looking oddities, in their dark, spiked clothing; on Tuesday they wear a dress that is second to none in point of brilliance of colouring and satiny sheen. A peculiar characteristic of the old birds is their swift, straight flight; there is no perceptible slowing down, until a sudden and quite unexpected stop is made on a branch or other resting-place. When flying directly away from the observer, laden with a fish of some bulk, one might readily take it to be one of the noctule bats, so "flapping" does it take its course.

Of all the varied sights the mill-stream has to offer there is not one to beat that of a kingfisher engaged in the occupation Nature has forced on him for his very existence, and surely his beauty, if nothing else, should suffice to restrain the wanton gunner. In a glass case, or plastered on a hat, what is he but a mere travesty? Thank heaven, people cannot keep him in a cage, for when thus imprisoned he quickly dies. Cannot we see our way to spare him the tiny fish on which he thrives, especially as most of these are minnows and gudgeon, and such as we seldom use ourselves?

FROM THE FARMS.

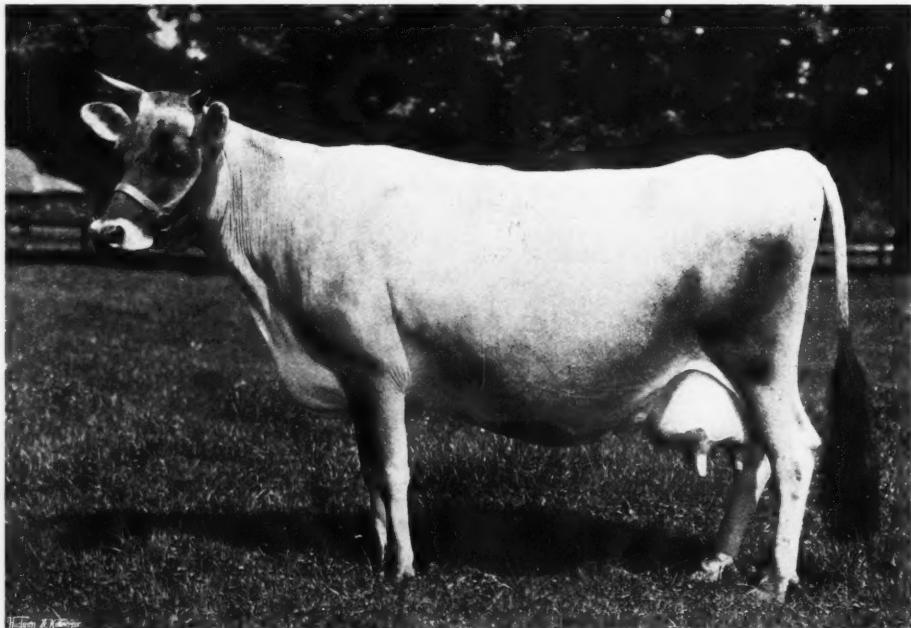
FARM-BUILDINGS.

THE new issue of the "Country Gentlemen's Estate Book" is, in our opinion, the best that has yet appeared. It is full of articles which will be read with interest by country gentlemen, and yet is not without a literary and poetic touch. But the article on farm-buildings, we need scarcely say, is sternly practical. Mr. Puxley, the writer, lays it down that farm-buildings should be useful and fit for the purpose, moderate in price, built so as to economise time, and not ugly. The first of these conditions is certainly not fulfilled by farm-buildings to old homesteads. Thirty or forty years ago the farmer had to make provision for eventualities that do not now concern him. He needed a large granary, where wheat could be stored till it found a suitable market. He needed a great store barn, and he had a stationary threshing-machine. In other respects he failed to meet modern requirements. Many of these things are not required on the farm of to-day. The travelling threshing-machine has supplanted the one that was stationary, and in every other respect a radical change has taken place. Of course, the buildings must be constructed to suit the nature of the husbandry, and where there is more pasture land than arable it would be absurd to spend large quantities of money on elaborate arrangements for storing grain. His cattle-yard was usually uncovered and exposed to the rain, which washed the most useful elements out of the manure. It is now generally admitted that cattle-yards ought to be covered, and the arrangements for feeding cattle ought to be worked out so as to make a minimum demand upon labour. The writer warmly recommends Dutch barns, under which the hay may be rapidly and favourably stored. He also pleads for moderation in price. It is certain that the most expensive buildings are very seldom the most suitable for their purpose, and in these days few landowners can afford to be lavish in their expenditure. Lastly, we are glad that the writer puts in a plea that the buildings should not be ornamental. On work-a-day farms, which are not meant for any other purpose than to afford a livelihood for the tenant, it is not always wise or practicable to go to expense for the mere sake of appearance; but, on the other hand, if a little taste be brought into action it is quite possible to avoid downright ugliness. He also pleads for stone and thatch

as against the red bricks and slates so commonly employed, and here, too, we are in full sympathy with him.

THE DISPOSAL OF SEWAGE.

A little book has just come into our hands, written by Henry Lemmoine-Cannon, but we doubt if it will be satisfactory to our country readers. The present writer remembers many a long conversation he used to have with the late Dr. Vivian Poore on this subject. Dr. Poore was, perhaps, the greatest authority on rural hygiene that England has produced, but he would have been horrified to read of the methods that are recommended here. He did not like tanks, and a favourite saying of his was "Where there are drains there is danger," while his objections to water-borne sewage were very strong indeed. The principle he advocated was that what was taken originally from the land should ultimately be sent back to it. The question of the most efficient manner in which to accomplish this is a very puzzling one. Whatever treatment sewage may be subjected to, it is much to be regretted that our rivers should ultimately receive it. Experience has shown that they never do so without being subject to pollution. Besides, there is a wicked waste of good manure, a material very difficult to obtain in some parts of the country. One would think that science might step in and show a manner of caking or drying sewage, without losing its manurial qualities, which would enable it to be despatched conveniently and easily to any part of the country. Dr. Poore used also to hold very liberal ideas about the effect of sewage on wells. He did not consider this to be nearly as dangerous as some people suppose. He looked to the earth as the great deodoriser and purifier, and held that if water passed through a sufficient quantity of this natural filter it was thereby



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A JERSEY COW.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

purified. His contention was curiously substantiated by the case that occurred the other day on the Wandle, where the cess-beds were infected by the sewage water, but the water itself after leaving them became wholesome and drinkable. There is no doubt whatever that a certain amount of sewage in a river is necessary to feed the vegetable organisms, which in their turn become food for the fish. But it is not a very alluring prospect—that of having the sewage of our large towns discharged in a more or less impure condition into the rivers.

THE SMITHFIELD MARKET.

To people with some imagination the figures recording the quantity of agricultural produce delivered at Smithfield Market must seem astounding. Last year produced records in every direction. The total amount of produce delivered in the meat, poultry, and provision sections amounted to 415,295 tons. The supplies from the United States and the Argentine were the heaviest yet known, and amounted to more than 42 per cent. of the total supplies. The Australians also beat their past record by sending 23 per cent. of the total supplies. The surprising thing is that while the production of food is so very much extended in Great Britain, there still seems to be an endless market for as much as can possibly be sent from abroad. Statisticians might do worse than give us a careful analysis of the causes of all this. From a merely superficial view it would seem that the people of this country must, on the average, consume far more meat, poultry, game, vegetables, and fruit than they ever did before. Mulhall, we believe, works out the average in his dictionary of statistics, but then it must surely change from year to year.

SHOOTING.

THE DECREASE OF BLACK GAME.

ONE of the fine and really wild denizens of our woods and heaths that seems to be slowly, but surely, in process of extermination, is the blackcock. In places where he was to be found in fair numbers some twenty years ago he is not to be seen any longer, and the reason is not very apparent. In such neighbourhoods as that of the New Forest and of Ashdown Forest in the South, the spread of population is no doubt much against him, although all accounts show that his numbers had begun to decrease in those localities before there was any such trend of humanity thither as would seem likely to affect him. On Exmoor he exists, but it is a struggle in which he is being gradually worsted. Yet all conditions of food and shelter seem to be as available for him as they were, and he is as well able to take care of himself as any bird we know. No one who has tried the circumventing of a party of old blackcock in a fir wood will deny him that ability. We may, however, have a vague sense that England, especially in the South, is becoming too highly civilised for a bird so essentially wild. His decrease in certain parts of Scotland which seem just made for his residence, and, indeed, over Scotland generally, is a good deal more difficult to understand. The fir woods, which he loves, are certainly not being restricted in area, and the capercailzie, a lover of like resorts, is well known to be extending its range. Of course the black game are not such purely fir-wood dwellers as the capercailzie, nor does the fir furnish them with such an important part of their diet. Some have conjectured that the black game's numbers are less than they were in consequence of the reduction in the number of the cornfields reaching up into the moor. We see, now and then, away from all present habitation on the moor, signs of an abandoned tillage, which are reminiscent of a time when war prices ruled and it paid to grow corn on the least favourable land. With the change of prices, the fields farthest from market, and otherwise least profitable, have been given up, and perhaps the black game feel the loss of the pickings they used to take of them. A correspondent, owner of a property in one of the finest countries in Scotland for the black game, writes to us as follows on this subject: "It is to be regretted that in what were formerly the strongholds of black game, there are to-day nothing like the former quantity. Agricultural conditions have, of course, been changing during the last five-and-twenty years, and the amount of cropping up in the hills is now reduced to a minimum. Those little patches of corn which ran up into a tangled belt of birches, surrounded on either side by stretches of 'sprat,' or rushes, or rough heather-clad moor, are now unsown; the birches have been cut down, the rushy stretches have been drained, and the heather ruthlessly burnt for the accommodation of sheep. We greatly fear the food supply of black game is steadily diminishing. The record achieved on

October 4th, 1869, when 247 blackcocks were killed in one day on the Duke of Buccleuch's property at Glenwharrie, does not seem likely to be reached. Nowadays on the same beat 24 blackcocks would not, we fancy, be considered a bad day. But last season what black game there were had a grand chance, and they were generally reported as being unusually plentiful. By this it is to be feared that, in many cases, the young birds paid heavy toll in the earlier part of the season. If only the young birds could be spared and the old ones of both sexes shot (for surely experience with pheasants must by now have taught us how inexpedient it must be to spare ALL the greyhens), beneficial results would surely follow. Importation of fresh blood from Scandinavia might be tried with advantage, and an alteration in the existing game laws, making it illegal to shoot black game before October 1st, would save many a poult from

massacre early in the season. The 'Decrease of Black Game' is a fact; methods as to how to effect an increase, having never yet been thoroughly tried, remain a speculation. On December 14th last year, at Tarbolton Moss in Ayrshire, a female capercailzie was killed. This locality is considerably out of the area where one would expect to find one of those birds; but the species is said to be increasing, and it is asserted that the females precede the males in the search for new habitats. Partridges, during last season, were more numerous than usual. The old practice of walking the birds up is still in more general favour than the modern and more productive system of driving them. In Wigtownshire we have seen as many partridges as would please a Norfolk proprietor; but the rootfields here lie far apart, and the undulations of the ground are such that to organise a day's driving would require so many beaters as would be hard to find. Someone has said that 'to have pheasants is only a matter of money.' This is perfectly true; and those who had hand-reared birds last year have no cause to complain. Favoured with good weather, the keepers had no excuse for not rearing their young birds, and diseases such as gapes and cramps were the exception. Wild birds with similar conditions did well, and, as one notices the spread of the pheasant into what were formerly the private haunts of the black game, one cannot help realising that now there are two kinds of birds seeking to pick up a living on ground which under changed agricultural conditions can barely support one. The increase of the pheasant may well find a place in the themes on the 'Decrease of Black Game.'

"Brown hares have for many years been generally decreasing, the provision of the Ground Game Act enabling the farmers to persecute them; but on properties where they are protected and looked after the past season has been a satisfactory one. Blue hares are confined to the higher country. Their distribution does not seem to be growing, but they still seem to maintain about their same numbers. Universal attention is being paid to the rabbit. The havoc he works amongst the farmer's crops, and the ruthless damage he does to the landlord's young plantations, have called forth the willing co-operation of both to keep down the pest. By snaring and trapping all the year round the nuisance is only kept in subjection, and there is no fear that a big head of rabbits could not be got up if left alone for a season, though at present their numbers are less than they have

been for a number of years. Roe deer, on account of the damage they also do, are kept well in hand, and their numbers remain about the same, though if anything they are perhaps slightly on the increase."

GENERAL APPLICABILITY OF THE ABCVE REMARKS.

THE above observations are made with special reference to the South-Western side of Scotland, but in general terms they seem applicable very much more widely. The decrease of black game and the increase of roe are very generally remarked, as well as the extending range of the capercailzie. It is well

recognised that the very heavy gale of some fifteen years ago, which devastated such great portions of the fir woods in the East of Scotland, in which the capercailzie then chiefly lived, led to their spread, in search of similar habitats, over a wide area; and since that extension they have been pushing out gradually more and more. The ultimate effect of the Ground Game Act in England, leading farmers to preserve hares in order to enhance the value of the shooting rights, which they like to take over with the agricultural rights from the landlord, has not yet, as it appears, reached that part of Scotland; and brown hares are there on the decrease, as they were almost universally in the first years after the passing of the Act.

BLACK GAME AND CAPERCAILZIE FOR BRITISH COLUMBIA.

A propos of the above, we have a letter from Mr. J. C. Crowley, 16, Chatsworth Road, Croydon, informing us that he is acting as the treasurer in England for a fund which is being collected to undertake the interesting experiment of importing black game and capercailzie into British Columbia. Any sums contributed in aid will, according to formula, be



A VERSICOLOR COCK IN BREEDING-PEN.

gratefully received and acknowledged, and it is to be presumed that offers in kind, that is to say, in black game or in capercailzie, will be received in a like spirit. The importation, as we understand, is in the management of the Fish and Game Club of Victoria and Vancouver, and the genuine character of the appeal and purely sporting nature of the experiment seem to be very sufficiently vouched for by some of the names appearing on the circular which is being sent out to appeal for funds. It appears that some £300 to £400 is the sum estimated as needful for making the experiment on an adequate scale, and of this very nearly a half has been collected, so that the balance is



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AN EXCELLENT SHELTER.

space of 6ft.; if, therefore, the shot is a crossing one, that is to say, if the bird is flying across the shooter, either to the right or left, some allowance must be made to enable the shot to strike the bird. The calculations, rough and ready as they are, which have been given show that, at a range of 30yds., something like 6ft. must be allowed, and a reference to accurately-worked-out tables tells us that the exact space through which a bird, flying at the rate already alluded to, will have moved during the time that elapses between the fall of the hammer and the arrival of the shot may be taken at 5ft. 4in. This, therefore, is theoretically the allowance to be made for a crossing shot at 30yds. distance. The allowances to be made at other ranges, but under the same conditions of speed of shot and objective, work out much as follows:

<i>Range.</i>	<i>Allowance.</i>
20yds.	3ft. 8in.
25yds.	4ft. 9in.
35yds.	7ft. 2in.
40yds.	8ft. 6in.

Heavier shot will be found to give an increase of velocity, but the difference of velocity is not sufficient to affect seriously the above calculations.

The spread of the charge of shot, provides a certain margin of safety for the shooter, as far as the hitting of the object is concerned, but enough has been shown to point out clearly that the art of shooting flying birds does not consist in aiming directly at the object which it is desired to hit. The speed of 60ft. per second may be taken to represent roughly that of a bird in full flight, and it is clear that the "allowances" quoted above would undergo some modification in the case of birds travelling at a lower rate of speed.

In the case of a bird flying in a direct line away from the shooter, the space covered by the bird before

it is overtaken by the shot is so small that no allowance is necessary; but in most cases it is probable that it will be either rising or sloping downwards in its flight, and either of these events must be taken into calculation by the shooter.

It is not to be supposed for a moment that any shooter is expected to go through the form of working out these calculations in the field, but if the principle they involve of "looking well ahead" were to be clearly grasped many an indifferent shot would be assisted to improve his shooting, and one would perhaps be spared the too frequent spectacle of rabbits and hares shot in the hind-quarters. The tail of the pheasant would no longer be the recipient of the principal portion of a charge of shot, and there would be a far larger proportion of clean-killed birds when "driving" takes place. Nothing but constant practice can enable a shooter to bring the gun to bear instinctively, not on the object aimed at, but at the exact spot where it will be when the shot reaches it. Much, however, may be gained in this direction if the gun is laid on the object and then immediately swung forward in the line of motion before the trigger is pulled. Excellent practice in this respect can be obtained at several of the shooting schools which are attached to the establishments of the leading gunmakers, with the further advantage that the services of an expert are usually available to point out the extent of the errors committed and the best method of correcting them.

ROOK AND RABBIT RIFLES.

Replying to various correspondents who ask for information as to the most suitable form of rifle for rook and rabbit shooting, we think that in the great majority of cases it is advisable to use a weapon, or perhaps one might say a cartridge, giving a short range of flight to the bullet, and of a bore sufficiently large to kill a stag or a rabbit at once. Although very accurate shooting can be made with a rifle of .22 calibre, many instances occur in which the small bullet does not prevent a rabbit from crawling back into its hole to die; on this account we do not recommend this rifle for use in rabbit-shooting. The .250 with a short bullet well hollowed out, and a charge of 3gr. of shot cordite, will be found a useful and effective weapon both for rooks and rabbits. In rook-shooting, especially, it should be remembered that, on account of the angle of fire, long-range rifles are apt to be a source of considerable danger in this country, and it should not be forgotten that in rabbit-shooting with a rifle, solid bullets, driven by a strong charge of powder, are apt to glance in the most-unexpected directions. There are many ways of extracting a good deal of fun and amusement out of rabbit-shooting with rifles. A successful rabbit stalk supplies the occasion for employing many of the resources of the stalker after bigger game. Waiting for them is another plan, and, if this is adopted, it is well to let them get well clear of their holes before firing, unless there is something approaching to a certainty that a clean kill can be made at once. If the shooter can manage to ensconce himself comfortably in a tree, a good many rabbits can often be killed without stirring from the spot, for they do not seem able to look upwards, and are apparently indifferent to the fate of a companion, even if killed within a yard or two of themselves. Whatever rifle may be selected, we would remind our readers that, good as some of the American small-bore rifles are, and much as they are advertised and talked about, there are rifles of English manufacture which are every bit as good as regards accuracy, and infinitely better in balance, finish, and workmanship. These weapons can be bought from several of our leading gunmakers at prices which represent a very nominal margin of profit to the maker.

modest. From what the present writer knows of British Columbia, it seems hardly likely that the capercailzie, which has more than once proved itself adaptable to a change of locality, can fail to thrive. The pine forest, which is its needful habitat, is there in abundance, and the climate ought to be very suitable for it. The probable fortune of the imported black game is less easy to forecast, since we, at home, are even now lamenting their decrease in many places that seem well adapted to their wants, and their absolute disappearance from some. A letter to Mr. Crowley, at the address given, would elicit full information, and a list of many well-known names in British Columbia, to any of which, if it be preferred, contributions may be sent direct. It is proposed to ship the birds over in September.

HUNGARIAN PARTRIDGES AND THE ENGLISH CLIMATE.

The heavy snow and very severe weather of the latter end of March this year must serve, it is to be feared, as rather an expensive object-lesson in the value of importing Hungarian partridges, and turning them down at as early a date as possible. These birds, in their native land, are reared in a climate far more constant than ours, where the winters are far more severe, but more regular, and the spring begins a good deal earlier than ours, and is less liable to rapid changes. The consequence is that the Hungarian birds which we turn down here in the spring are constitutionally prepared for genial weather, they are earlier in their vernal development than our birds, and altogether unprepared for such shocks as our later half of March must have given them this year. For every reason it is advisable to get these birds, if at all, far back in the autumn, and turn them out as soon as the heavy shooting is over.

AIMING WITH A SHOT-GUN.

It is doubtful whether the most expert game-shots could tell one what is the exact amount of allowance they make in aiming at a moving object. Watch a really skilful game-shot at his work; birds may be coming high and fast right overhead, they may be swinging across him to right or left, but as far as the ordinary observer can see there is no aiming, no calculation; the gun comes up to the shoulder, the trigger is pulled, and time after time the bird falls clean killed in answer to the shot. Such shooting as this, and plenty of it can be witnessed in the shooting season, is apt to make an indifferent shooter wonder how it is done, for the slightest reflection shows clearly that, in a great many instances, one might even say in nearly all of them, a direct aim at a flying object would have resulted in either a clean miss, or at best a wounded and wobbling bird. It may be said that there are four main points to be considered in aiming at a moving object such as a flying bird: The line of direction, the distance of the object from the shooter, the speed at which that object is moving, and the velocity with which the shot will reach it.

Supposing, for instance, that a bird is flying at the rate of 60ft. per second, then in the tenth of a second it would have covered a space of 6ft. By referring to the calculations of the mean velocity of shot propelled by a normal charge at different distances from the muzzle of a gun, we find that with standard cartridges giving a velocity of 1,080ft. per second, the velocity of a charge of No. 6 shot at a range of 30yds. from the muzzle is 952ft. per second. Without going into minute fractions, it is evident that upon this basis the charge of shot takes slightly less than the tenth of a second to traverse the 30yds. or 90ft. which separate the shooter from the bird (supposing the range to be 30yds.); but we have shown that in the same space of time, viz., one-tenth of a second, the bird, flying at the rate of 60ft. per second, will have traversed a

CORRESPONDENCE.

FOXES AND "REYNARDINE."

SIR,—A point that the writer of last week's advice might have brought out is that the "Reynardine" and other scents obnoxious to foxes, although of efficacy, as he says, yet lose that efficacy, according to the verdict of many who have given them fair trial, after the first year. More than that, the foxes, having detected—probably by sight in the first instance—a sitting partridge in the midst of an atmosphere of "Reynardine," no longer avoid that atmosphere, but rather, when they meet it again, seem to associate it with the presence of the sitting bird, and make even a more careful scrutiny than usual of the hedge, or the particular portion of it, which is flavoured in this way—it seems finally even to attract them to the spot. The truth is that the successful keeper, in his dealings with foxes and all other vermin, is he who varies his methods, so that the vermin do not have the chance of learning by experience. They grow to know the ways of a "groovy" keeper as well as he knows them himself.—X.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BLUE TITS AT THE WINDOW.

[To the EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I photographed the blue tits from a window facing the east, at from ten to twelve o'clock in the day, when the light fell diagonally on the window. They were done in February in weak sunlight. I fixed a small branch from a tree on the window frame outside at a suitable angle and opposed to the light. I then baited the branch with a small piece of suet, which is a veritable "tit-bit." Having fixed up the camera, I focussed sharply the particular part of the branch on which the food was fixed, set the shutter, put in plate, and waited, as it were, for a "bite." Result—accompanying pictures. I may say that the photographs were taken through the glass of the window, the camera being propped up against it. I gave the nine-tenths of a second exposure, but found that not fast enough for some subjects, as a tomtit's movements are very nimble.—A. KILLICK.

THE GREEN LIZARD.

[To the EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—There is no more charming pet than the green lizard, and I often wonder why this beautiful and friendly little creature is not more often found domesticated in animal-loving households. I send you a photograph which shows how confidently tame *Lacerta viridis*, to accord him his full Latin dignities, may become. The shining green is flecked with a multitude of golden spots, and the throat, especially in males during the breeding season, is blue. The green, or, as it is sometimes called, the Jersey lizard, being common in the island, haunts sunny places, and may be found in orchards, gardens, copses, and the like where food is abundant and concealment at hand in case of danger. Old ruins, too, are a favourite haunt. Here the vivid flash of emerald flits among the moss-covered stones with wonderful activity, lying at one moment as if asleep in the sunbeams, or crawling slowly as if incapable of any greater speed, until a hand approaches for capture, when the lovely little creature vanishes as if by magic. The green lizard appears to revel in sunshine. The food of the green lizard is chiefly large insects and their larvae, slugs, and worms; in grassy districts it lives almost entirely on grasshoppers (a somewhat lean diet), and at times attacks smaller species of its own tribe. With all its swiftness, this lizard sometimes resorts to tree climbing when chased, and when hard pressed "takes tremendous leaps down to the ground, marvellously enough without injury to body or tail, which latter is very brittle." The pairing-time is in the spring or early summer, after much

fighting between the males; four weeks after the laying of the eggs the young are hatched. Mealworms, snails, and butterflies are additional foods, enumerated by Dr. Gadow. Susceptible as the green lizard is to kindness, and easily tamed, it is yet sufficiently bold, and apt to bite if it feels itself aggrieved. Mr. J. G. Wood tells us that in France and other countries it is greatly dreaded, "the popular belief attributing to it sundry destructive



HUNGER.

powers of the same nature as those which our rustic population believe to be exercised by the common newt."—G. M. G.

MAY-QUEEN REGISTER.

[To the EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Will you kindly allow me, through the medium of your paper, to invite all conductors and organisers of May-Queen festivals to support the above movement by sending me the following particulars? (1) The full address of town or village where the annual festival takes place; (2) in brackets after which the year from which it has been generally continuous; (3) the approximate date of the festival; (4) whether admission free or by ticket; (5) the name and age of this year's May-Queen. From the information supplied a list will be sent to the Press for the benefit of those desirous of witnessing any of the festivals.—J. D., Hon. Secretary, May-Queen Register, 43, Victoria Road, Bromley Common, Kent.



SATISFACTION.

ANIMALS IN MUSIC-HALLS.

[To the EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—A passage in your very interesting and able review of Mr. E. F. Benson's novel, "The Angel of Pain," particularly struck my mind. In speaking of Merivale's command over the wild birds, which would come and perch on his hand, your reviewer says: "It is only with the wretched music-hall animals that have been taught, by a judicious use of hot irons, to please a discerning British public by acting contrary to their rational instinct, that this can ever be achieved without a miracle." That hits the nail on the head—the "judicious use of hot irons," and the "discerning" British public. There are anti-vivisection societies, societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals, sympathetic and sentimental women, pampered pet dogs, and horses ill from underwork; and yet, as soon as the selfish desire for amusement enters into the question, the sufferings of the animal creation are contemptuously put aside, and the "discerning" public that patronises music-halls goes to gloat over the drug-dozed fury of a bullied, degraded tiger, or to see poor little terriers performing unamusing little tricks, which have, in themselves, no kind of interest or attraction. It is quite possible that the hot iron is not always used; but the exhibition is none the less cruel, I might almost say degrading. Think of the life these animals lead: always in confinement, with none of the natural liberty which is an animal's—even a pet dog's—first desideratum, and forced to appear every evening before the unhealthy glare of footlights in a foul atmosphere, to disobey the laws of their own being. It is not the fault of the trainers. No one can be blamed for making a living in a legal manner, though that manner may not be the highest open to him. The blame falls rightly on the "discerning" public that can be amused by exhibitions which in themselves are totally devoid of interest, and in order to obtain that amusement may see the lives of beings who have an existence of their own prostituted to pass away an idle moment. In the case of the larger animals, we come to a more serious charge. There can be no doubt that terrorism, ill-treatment, downright cruelty are the means by which dominion is gained



THE GREEN LIZARD.

over the wild beasts of the forest. Again, we do not blame the trainers. A man has a right to risk his own life in a cage full of lions. He has a legal right to go as close to the law as ever he can in the measures he takes to obtain the mastery over his animals. The public has no right whatever to make the existence of such people possible by going to see and applaud their exhibitions. What is the sentiment aroused by such exhibitions as we have seen lately in some of the places of public interest? Is it admiration of the trainer's courage in facing all these beasts at once? Is it artistic appreciation of the beauty of the animals themselves? It is neither. It is simply the thrill of sensation at the danger—the morbid excitement of thinking that at any moment there may be a horrible scene of blood, wounds, and death. We are only removed from the Ancient Romans of the Coliseum, or from the French nobility who crowded the roofs and windows of Paris to see a man tortured to death, by our hypocrisy. The sensation these exhibitions of animals produce is every whit as degrading and as brutal, only we have not the moral courage to "go the whole hog." I will not dwell on the shivering, phthisic monkeys that are forced to face the bitter winds in our streets, nor the dancing bears dragged, footsore and hungry, over the country-side to frighten horses and display their pitiful tricks. My point, Sir, is this, and it is one on which all true lovers of animals will agree with me: that the brute creation, though subservient to man, has an existence and rights of its own just as man has, an existence that we have no right to pervert for our own ends. To improve it, foster it, for ends that bring solid benefit to man, is our right; to debase it and torture it in order to gain amusement which, when it is not brutal, is merely silly, is our crime. We put in prison a man who overdrives his horse; we make a hero of a man who takes the whole life of an animal and makes of it a prolonged misery. The whole question of performing animals needs searching examination, and I can only hope against hope that the time is not far off when it will be taken up.—H. H. C.



BELOW THE MOORISH AQUEDUCT AT ALGECIRAS.

THE GREEN TREE FROG. [TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—A correspondent writing from Bordeaux in your issue of March 3rd, speaks of green tree frogs as very amusing and interesting pets to keep in captivity. Some years ago I was one of a fishing-party at Ancora in Portugal, where these little frogs abounded. A friend of mine captured three of them for me, and carried them in his handkerchief to the hotel where we were staying. I put them into a glass globe, and brought them over to England with me. They caused much amusement on board, as I had to search for flies and spiders to satisfy their unfailing appetites. I kept them in the globe for about a year, and they got very tame, and would crawl up my sleeve and take food from my fingers. They preferred big fat spiders and buzzing bluebottles to anything else. In winter I kept them in a warm room, and when flies and spiders were not easy to find, I used to tie a bit of raw

beef to a piece of cotton and dangle it into the globe, and they would jump up and swallow it in a trice. As I was leaving home on a long visit I was obliged, with great regret, to give them away, and they ended their days in one of the colleges at Oxford.—L. T., Kew.

THE PUBLIC TASTE IN BUTTER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In ventilating the subject of pure butter, it may be as well to remember that so accustomed has the public—especially people in large towns—become to butter *with something added to it*, that the purest and best butter will not fetch by twopence the highest price given. Our English butter factories, I am told, are compelled to blend their product with Danish before putting it on the market. If you were to offer Londoners the best Devonshire-made,

or the ordinary article absolutely pure, they would tell you they found it tasteless, and this not in cheap restaurants, but even in some of the clubs. I have complained of butter being rancid at my own, and been met with the reply that members of the house committee could find nothing the matter with it. Of course, I was not complaining of a certain amount of salt, but of what, to a countryman, simply tasted "high." Londoners evidently think it "folly to be wise" in such discrimination.

—DARSET.

SCENES IN SUNNY SPAIN.

[TO THE EDITOR.]
SIR,—I enclose you some interesting snapshots of country life in

Southern Spain, taken recently at Algeciras when upon my way home from Malta. This picturesque little town, delightfully situated in the Bay of Gibraltar, and celebrated alike for its oranges and bullfights, was early appreciated, centuries back, by its then conquerors the Moors, who named it Al-Gezira-al-Khadra (the Green Isle), which designation may be seen still preserved in the Spanish name, Isla Verde Gené. The first photograph shows part of a farmyard, which I found wandering about the landscape in Indian file, and "without any visible means of"—ownership! In the middle distance may be discerned two urchins, who vigorously demanded "una peseta" of the "Señor" for their accidental inclusion in the photograph; whilst in the background are seen some arches of the handsome Moorish aqueduct of Algeciras. It is of considerable length, stretching right across the valley, and is still in use. It is shown better in the second photograph, which I obtained at the expense of many pricks from a cactus hedge upon which I had to poise myself. The other photograph—"Las Lavanderas" (the laundresses)—speaks for itself, and is an everyday sight by running streams in Spain, Italy, and other countries. Here plenty of water, air, and sunshine take the place of chemicals and centrifugal driers! The musical salutation of these ladies—"Buenos días, Señor"—and their laughter as I took the snap-shot were pleasant to listen to.—FRANK WRIGHT, North Kensington, W.

[We have been compelled to omit the second photograph mentioned by our correspondent.—ED.]



SPANISH LAUNDRESSES.